

This material is presented solely for non-commercial
educational/research purposes.

CHAPTER 7

THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA,

c. AD 200 to 700

INTRODUCTION

For more than three centuries, from the reign of Constantine (AD 306–37) to the Arab invasions of the 630s, Mediterranean Africa was the scene of a prosperous and brilliant Christian civilization. Never before or since has North Africa exercised so great an influence on contemporary events and thought. The Christian leaders, Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430) and Cyril of Alexandria (died AD 444), moulded the teaching of the Latin and Greek Churches respectively in a way that has survived for centuries. Augustine's theology of grace was accepted by Protestants and Roman Catholics alike during the Reformation era, Cyril's theology of the Incarnation remained standard orthodox teaching to modern times, and these examples illustrate the extent to which Mediterranean Africa faced towards Europe rather than towards the remainder of Africa for long periods in its history.

The transition from Graeco-Roman to Christian North Africa resulted in profound changes at every level of society. At the beginning of the third century AD, Mediterranean Africa was dominated by its cities, the final brilliant product of the military and economic power of Rome, and the lives of its peoples were watched over by the 'immortal gods of Rome', associated with the territorial and tribal gods and goddesses the origin of whose worship was lost in the mists of time. For the ordinary provincial the emperor was the intermediary between the world of gods and their own, a distant but kindly providence to whom recourse could be had against the extortions of his servants.¹ On the emperor's welfare depended also that of his subjects; there was a sense of identification between ruler and ruled. There are North African inscriptions calling on the gods to protect the emperor.² A

¹ For instance, the farmers on the imperial estate of the Saltus Burunitanus (Souk el-Khmis) petition the 'divine providence' of the Emperor Commodus in AD 183 for protection against injuries inflicted on them by his bailiffs; *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* [CIL], 8, 10570, col. 3, lines 1–2.

² For instance, CIL, 8, 895, 'Mars Augustus protector domini nostri' from Villa Magna in honour of Gordian III, and compare *ibid.* 6353, 'Saturnus et Iuppiter omnipotens Augustus conservator sacer Augustorum' (Mastar, a Christian centre in the fourth century).

INTRODUCTION

century later the official religion of the Graeco-Roman world was Christianity. Wealth previously lavished on public buildings or public entertainment was being bequeathed to the clergy or the monasteries. The bishop had replaced the mayor (*curator*) as the chief inhabitant of the town, and many of the functions of civil government were falling to his responsibility. The countryside was also witnessing changes. Over great areas in North Africa, tribal life had already given way to settled life, and the villagers were finding that their olive-oil was becoming a staple product throughout the western Mediterranean. In contrast to their counterparts on the northern shores of the Mediterranean, they retained an element of prosperity throughout the whole of this period. In the seventh century, the Arab invaders found themselves moving through a continuous forest of olive trees extending westwards from Tripolitania to the Chott el-Hodna. In Egypt, the monastery, often a large agricultural unit, dominated the scene as landlord, provider and refuge for the Coptic peasantry. Christianity permeated every level of society. While it was not the only thing that was happening in Mediterranean Africa in these centuries, it was by far the most important.

This chapter outlines the history of this civilization from its beginnings to its collapse before the Arabs, partial in Egypt but complete in North Africa. Inevitably Christianity itself must take the centre of the stage. The survey thus falls into two parts. The Church in North Africa west of the Gulf of Syrtis (Sidra) was separated from that in Egypt and Cyrenaica by geography, language and theological tradition. The North Africans were Latin-speaking, their theology was cast in a puritan mould, they were sectarian and inward-looking, emphasizing the work of the Holy Spirit to maintain the integrity of the Church pure from the taint of the outside world and the state, and they were concerned with issues connected with membership of this body of the saved, especially with predestination and grace. The Church in Egypt and Cyrenaica was, on the other hand, Greek-speaking and outward-looking, responsible for missions to Nubia, Ethiopia and south India, and while not denying the importance of ecclesiastical discipline, directed its energies towards arriving at an understanding of the mystery of human salvation through the Incarnation. The issues that moved it were doctrinal, and these owed much to the influence of the philosophical school of Alexandrian Jewry, above all to Philo (died *c.* AD 40). Its theology tended to regard God and his relation to creation in terms of God and His Word or Reason incarnate in Jesus Christ, a binitarian approach to theology, whereas the North Africans, lacking a similar Jewish philosophical

THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

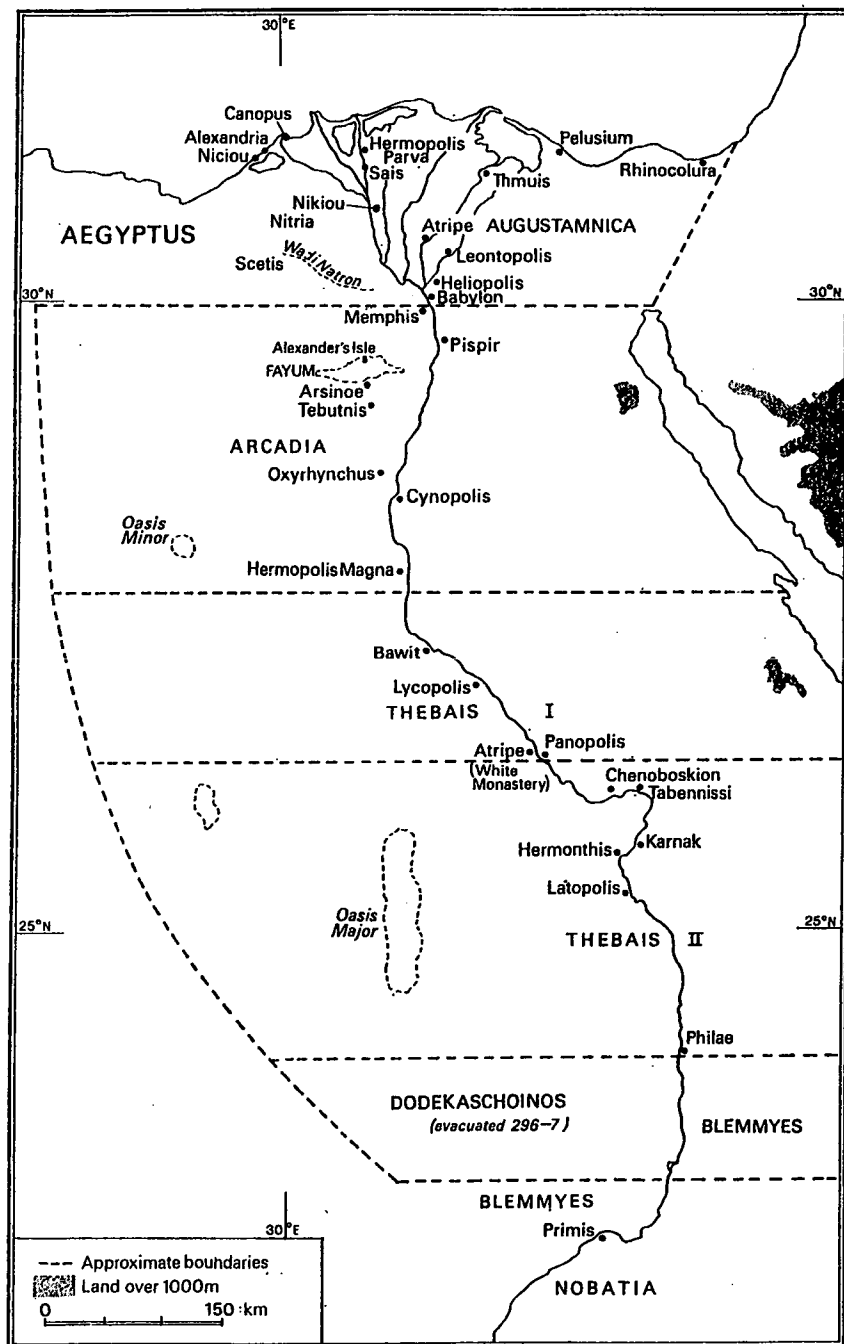
tradition, emphasized instead the biblical religion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Despite many efforts to reach mutual understanding, especially at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, the differences in interpretation between the two halves of Christendom were fundamental, and their persistence contributed to the ultimate weakness of the Christian position in the southern Mediterranean when threatened by the apparently all-conquering message of Islam.

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE CHURCH IN EGYPT AND CYRENAICA

The origins of the Church in Egypt and Cyrenaica are almost as obscure as those of the Church in North Africa. By the time Eusebius wrote his *Ecclesiastical history* in AD 324 there was a firmly held Church tradition which named Peter's disciple Mark as the founder of the Christian community there.¹ Apollos, who 'knew only the baptism of John' (Acts 18:25), was an Alexandrian, but nothing is known of any mission by him in his native city after he had received 'more perfect instruction' from Paul. As at Carthage, the only tangible point of departure is provided by the Jews, and perhaps the apocryphal *Acta Marci*, telling how Mark came from Rome and evangelized in the Jewish quarter of Alexandria, preserves a folk memory of how Christianity started there. There had been Jews in Egypt for the previous four centuries. There was a temple modelled on that at Jerusalem, at Leontopolis, and a vigorous literary tradition that had been responsible for the production of the Septuagint. By the first half of the first century AD, the Jews dominated two of the five quarters into which Alexandria was divided, and were scattered in considerable numbers (Philo thought one million all told) between Cyrenaica and Egypt's border with Nubia. They were self-conscious communities, largely unreconciled with their Greek and Egyptian neighbours, and on two occasions, in AD 73 and 115, rose against them. In Alexandria itself, the Jewish *politeuma* had its own treasury and court of justice. There the smouldering hostility between Jew and Greek led to a *pogrom* of Jews in AD 38 followed by two famous embassies by the Jews, first to Caligula and then to his successor Claudius. Claudius firmly delimited the privileges of the Alexandrian Jews.

¹ See F. C. Burkitt, 'The Christian Church in the East', in S. A. Cook, F. E. Adcock, M. P. Charlesworth and N. H. Baynes, eds., *Cambridge ancient history*, xii (Cambridge, 1939), 476.

THE EARLY CHURCH IN EGYPT AND CYRENAICA



60 Egypt in late Roman times.

Philo, who left a record in *Legatio ad Gaium* of the embassy to Caligula, was the outstanding representative of Alexandrian Jewry. Though intensely loyal to the *Torah* he did not share his countrymen's hostility towards Graeco-Roman society. His contribution towards reconciliation was an attempt largely through allegorical interpretation of Scripture to weld Jewish and Greek and, especially, Platonic thought into one system. He lacked immediate followers and two centuries later it was the Alexandrian Christians who were to copy Philo almost verbatim in their attempt to produce a synthesis of Christian and Greek philosophy. Clement (fl. AD 180-200) may be regarded as Philo's most distinguished disciple.

Alongside the philosophical Judaism represented by Philo and his school, there was a strongly ascetic form of Judaism that Eusebius describes, represented by the Therapeutae, who had settlements on Lake Mareotis, south-west of the city (*Hist. Eccl.* II.17). Eusebius mistakenly regarded these as Christians, so closely did they resemble the monks of the early fourth century. In this respect also, the Jews of Egypt anticipated the development of Christianity there.

It was not until the early part of the second century AD, however, that there is firm evidence for Christianity. Then we find Jews and Christians engaged in bitter debate. The writer of the *Letter of Barnabas* was probably a convert from the Alexandrian synagogue. He used the same methods of scriptural interpretation as those employed by the rabbis, combined, however, with a fanatical hatred of Judaism. To him the Jews were 'wretched men' of absurd ceremonial law, who failed to understand that the prophecies of their Scriptures referred to Christ. Even so, *Barnabas* concluded by describing the 'way of life' in contrast to 'the way of darkness' in the same terms as the Q'mran sectaries a century before. He showed the existence of an Egyptian Christianity which could be understood within the context of sectarian Judaism. A similar animosity directed against orthodox Judaism is contained in the fragments of the *Unknown Gospel* gleaned from a papyrus which must date to the early or mid second century, and which was written probably for the Christian community in Alexandria.¹

The Fourth Gospel, with its affiliations with the thought of Q'mran and strong criticism of 'the Jews', was also in circulation during this period. Another papyrus discovery indicates how the ascetic ideal was regarded by some Egyptian Christians as the door to the kingdom of

¹ Published by H. I. Bell and T. C. Skeat, eds., *Fragments of an unknown gospel* (London, 1935).

Heaven. The *Gospel of Thomas*, in origin probably an Aramaic gospel and compiled not later than the end of the first century AD, had its readers at Oxyrhynchus and elsewhere in the Nile Valley.¹ The existence of a Jewish-Christian strain in the Christianity of the second century is attested further by the fragments of the *Gospel according to the Egyptians* and the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* preserved by Clement.

These early beginnings of Christianity may have been caught up in the disastrous rising of the Jews in AD 115-17, which started in Cyrenaica and spread far down the Nile Valley. Christianity next emerges c. 135, when the surviving Jewish background was that of philosophy and theosophy. The Gnostic movements, which dominated the Christian scene at Alexandria between c. 135 and c. 180, associated with its great teachers Basilides, Valentinus and Heracleon, owed much to this legacy; they passed it on to their orthodox successors in what became the Alexandrian theological tradition.

The important place which Gnosticism held in Egyptian Christianity is demonstrated by the discovery of a complete library of forty-eight Gnostic books in a fourth-fifth century AD site at Nag-Hammadi, north of Luxor.² These documents reveal the Egyptian Gnostics as theosophical dualists concerned to understand the ultimate secrets of the universe and of man's place within it. Their interest in the psychology of dreams, as indicating the fearsome loneliness of individual man, reminds one of some aspects of existentialism. The framework, however, in which they elaborated their systems still owed much to Jewish attitudes, with its scenes set in the Temple or the Mount of Olives.

What made Gnosticism a formidable movement was its application of the concepts of current Middle Platonic philosophy to interpret the message of the Jewish Scriptures. The dualism of the Q'mran sectaries was combined with the allegorizing of Philo, with the result that by the middle of the second century AD the Alexandrian Gnostics had won an intellectual dominance of Christian thought in the Mediterranean, and in Alexandria this seems to have led to a widespread interest in Christianity among educated Greeks.

The price, however, was too high for the Church to pay. The Gnostic scheme of salvation allowed no place for the ministry of Jesus and very

¹ Fragments of the Gospel containing Logia were first found at Oxyrhynchus in 1895 (see B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, eds., *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Λογια Ιησου ['Logia Jesu'] [London, 1897]). The entire text was recovered in the Gnostic library of Nag-Hammadi. For its Aramaic background, see H. W. Montefiore in *New Testament Studies*, 1961, 5, 220-48.

² The publication of these important documents has hung fire. The best summary in English is W. Foerster, *Gnosis*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1975).

little for the New Testament. Christ was deprived of human personality, as surely as he was in the more extreme interpretations of Egyptian Monophysitism three centuries later. Its categorization of humanity into the illumined, the redeemable (the Psychics) and the vast mass of the remainder (Hylics) cut at the root of any thought of man 'made in the image of God' and equipped with free will. It was a Christianity without ethical impulse; Nirvana replaced heaven and hell. By c. AD 180 there were the beginnings of a successful orthodox reaction in Alexandria, as exemplified by the emergence of a catechetical school attached to the bishopric, and the first firm record of a bishop of Alexandria and of the Church there governed by the bishop and twelve presbyters. In 189 the presbyters elected Demetrius as bishop and he was destined to preside over the Church for the next forty-three years.

The Church which produced the catechetical school, led first by a converted Stoic Pantaenus (c. AD 180) and then by Clement, was becoming a well-organized and comparatively wealthy community. To many of its adherents it represented itself as a mystery with its own 'Secret Gospel of Mark' open only to baptized initiates. In this it stood near to its Gnostic rivals. But it was already a missionary church directing its message largely at the educated Greek-speaking community in Alexandria. Clement (c. AD 150-c. 215) was an Athenian immigrant to Egypt, but he interpreted exactly the outlook of the Alexandrian Christians. His convictions and his method of presenting Christianity were the exact opposite of those of his contemporary Tertullian in Carthage. His theology forbade the rejection of philosophy and the separation of the Christian from the remainder of society. If God's Word was the source of all being, then it was also the source of mankind and of his approaches to God as reflected in his philosophies. These might miss the finer chords of the 'true music of Amphion' contained in the Gospels. Mosaic writings preceded by far the Greek philosophers. Plato had plagiarized the Jewish prophets, but together Judaism and Greek philosophy prepared their adherents for the final truth of Christianity. 'There is but one river of truth,' Clement wrote, 'but many streams pour into it. The law is for the Jew what philosophy is for the Greek, a schoolmaster to bring them to God.'¹ Clement was addressing himself to an intellectual and upper-class community, people who would appreciate the ideal of the 'true Gnostic', a spiritual élite differentiated only from the disciples of the Gnostic teachers, Platonizing philosophers, by their acceptance of the ethic and institution

¹ Clement, *Stromateis*, 1.5.28.

of the Church. Even his view of Christ 'wholly without passion' and enjoying 'no emotional movement' differed little from that taught by his Gnostic contemporaries.¹ His ethic, too, recorded in his sermon *On the rich man's salvation*, unlike Tertullian's, did not reject wealth: it could be sanctified by its generous use. Asceticism and philosophical study of the truth of Scripture rather than martyrdom were the means of the Christian's salvation. Reason had an equal place with faith in the Christian's scale of values. All this was far from the hard school of Christianity that had developed in Carthage. Indeed by AD 200 the two great centres of Mediterranean Christianity were preaching diametrically opposed gospels.

Clement's career ended in AD 203, when he fled from Alexandria as the result of the same wave of persecution that caused the deaths of Perpetua and Felicitas in Carthage. His place as head of the catechetical school was taken by a young man of eighteen, whose father had been executed as a Christian. Origen has been regarded as the greatest figure in the Christian Church between Paul and Augustine. His name ('born of Horus') suggests Egyptian parentage, as does the fact of his removal from Alexandria in 215 when Caracalla cleared the city of native Egyptians. He had always been something of a child prodigy, with a passion both for Scripture and secular learning. Emotionally he felt himself on the side of the Church against the Gnostics and for martyrdom as against avoiding persecution. He was an enthusiast in all he did, including the one fatal error in his life when he accepted Matthew 19:12 literally, and hence precluded himself from a normal ecclesiastical career. His ordination as presbyter by the bishops of Jerusalem and Caesarea in AD 229 during an overland journey from Alexandria to Greece estranged him from Bishop Demetrius. He was forced to live the last twenty-two years of his life an exile in Caesarea, where he died in 253 or 254 after suffering cruel treatment in the Decian persecution.

Origen's importance lies in his ability to integrate Scripture and Greek philosophy in a single theological system and place the results in the service of the Greek-speaking Church for all time. He was first and foremost a teacher and a man of the Bible. There was scarcely a single book of Scripture on which he did not write an extensive commentary, elaborating his theology as he moved from verse to verse. Comparatively early in his career, he embarked on a vast work of scriptural exegesis. Arguing that one could not interpret rightly the revelation of the Divine Word through Scripture without an accurate text, he set to work

¹ Ibid. vi.8.69.

to collate the Septuagint with the Hebrew Bible and three current Jewish-Christian versions. This great work, known as the Hexapla through its arrangement in six parallel columns (Hebrew, Hebrew transliterated into Greek, the LXX, and the versions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion), provided him with the foundation for his true purpose of instructing and interpreting.

While still a young man, Origen had come under the influence of the founder of the Neo-Platonist school in Alexandria, Ammonius Saccas. From him he learnt the value of Greek philosophy, and he applied this knowledge with enthusiasm to the whole range of his scriptural exegesis. Through the language and text of Scripture always emerges the Platonist concept of God and the Stoic maxim for man, 'know thyself'. And when the individual had come to know himself, he would be able to advance towards spiritual perfection in Christ. Man's ultimate objective in Origen's eyes – like in those of Clement – was to become 'like God', and in this progress wisdom and knowledge were the highest Christian attributes. The method was asceticism. Small wonder that the monks of Nitria in the next century regarded Origen as one of their most revered authorities.

Middle Platonism affected his approach to Scripture and his approach to a theology of the Trinity. Always a fighter, he recognized Gnosticism and Monarchian theories as enemies of the Church which either merged Father and Son in a composite pantheistic figure, or represented the Son as simply the highest of the prophets. Gnosticism had been his target in the two most important of his earlier works, *On first principles* (*Peri Archon*) and the *Commentary on John*. Here he pointed to the inadequacy of the Gnostic ethic based on predestination, and stressed instead the supreme value of human free will and man's ability through moral reform to gain for himself the means of salvation. In his attempt, however, to find an answer to the Docetic view of Christ held by the Gnostics (i.e. that he was not truly man), and to the pantheism of other misbelievers (e.g. the Monarchians who tended to conflate God and Christ into a single undifferentiated Being), he was led to postulate a clear distinction between God the Father and His Word, the Son. God alone was unbegotten. The Son was also God, eternally with the Father, and therefore eternally generated, but the essential difference between non-generation and generation remained. 'Do we then say two Gods?' Origen asked a startled bishop suspected of Monarchianism. 'The power' might be one, but the distinction between God (δ $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$) and the Divine Word ($\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$) had to be recognized. Origen's solution came as

near as possible to a satisfactory apprehension of the Divine on the assumption of the Platonic view of God. But however it was presented, it always entailed a subordination of Son to Father, a lack of connection with the Jesus of history, and found little place for the Holy Spirit. In all this Origen prepared the way for the Arian and Christological controversies in which Alexandria and Egyptian Christianity would be deeply concerned in the next centuries.

Origen marks a watershed in the relations between pagan and Christian in Egypt. The Christian philosopher could now speak to his pagan contemporary on level terms. In AD 214 Origen was consulted by the governor of the province of Arabia – not summoned to renounce his faith; in c. 232 he was convoked to the imperial court at Antioch to discuss religious matters with the Empress Julia Mamaea. He was regarded highly by the Emperor Philip and his wife Otacilia Severa (AD 244–9), both favourable to Christianity. When he started his career, Christianity had been hardly more than a sect. Now it had become one of the major religions of the Graeco-Roman world. In his *Commentary on Matthew* written c. 248, Origen had foreseen the possibility of a world-wide persecution against the Christians. He was not far wrong. In AD 248 there was a vicious *pogrom* in Alexandria. Next year, in 249, the unsuccessful Philip gave way to Decius, and Egypt experienced the same persecution by inquisition that befell North Africa. Commissions supervising the performance of sacrifices were set up in towns and villages, and in the Fayum no less than forty-three *libelli* dating between 26 June and 12 July AD 250 have survived to show what happened. One typical example may be quoted:

To the commission chosen to superintend the sacrifices at the village of Alexander's Isle. From Aurelius Diogenes, son of Satabous, of the village of Alexander's Isle, aged 72 years, with a scar on the right eyebrow. I have always sacrificed to the gods, and now in your presence in accordance with the edict I have made sacrifice, and poured a libation, and partaken of the sacred victims. I request you to certify this below. Farewell. I, Aurelius Diogenes, have presented this petition.

2d Hand. I, Aurelius Syrus, saw you and your son sacrificing.

3d Hand. . . . onos . . .

1st Hand. The year one of the Emperor Caesar Gaius Messius Quintus Trajanus Decius Pius Felix Augustus, Epeiph 2 [26 June AD 250].¹

¹ See J. P. Knipfing, 'The *Libelli* of the Decian persecution', *Harvard Theological Review*, 1923, 16, 345–90. The elaborate imperial title which occupied five lines of the papyrus is paralleled on other municipal documents of this period where formal proof of identification was required, e.g. *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus* [P. Oxy.], 2892 (application for a Corn Dole, AD 269).

As in North Africa, Egyptian Christianity is revealed at this time as largely an urban movement. There were few incidents in the countryside and in Alexandria resistance was soon broken. Origen's pupil, Dionysius, who was bishop AD 247-64, wrote to his colleague in Antioch that, on the arrival of the emperor's edict,

all cowered with fear. And of many of the more eminent persons, some came forward immediately through fear, others in public positions were compelled to do so by their business, and others were dragged by those around them. Called by name, they approached the impure and unholy sacrifices, some pale and trembling, as if they were not for sacrificing but rather to be themselves the sacrifices and victims to the idols, so that the large crowd that stood around heaped mockery upon them, and it was evident that they were by nature cowards in everything, cowards both to die and to sacrifice. But others ran eagerly towards the altars, affirming by their forwardness that they had not been Christians even formerly; concerning whom the Lord very truly predicted that they shall hardly be saved. Of the rest, some followed one or other of these, others fled; some were captured, and of these some went as far as bonds and imprisonment, and certain, when they had been shut up for many days, then forswore themselves even before coming into court, while others, who remained firm for a certain time under tortures, subsequently gave in.¹

Throughout Mediterranean North Africa, the Decian persecution was the most serious moment for Christianity. At this stage the Christians formed well-established but also easily identifiable communities under leaders who were known and influential but not necessarily liked. Few seem to have been prepared to make a final break with the Graeco-Roman civilization that surrounded them. Only when this civilization became increasingly impoverished and oppressive, and Christianity began also to reflect the ideals of the rural population, were the traditional religions of the empire in danger. Meantime Alexandria, like Carthage, recovered relatively quickly from the persecution. When in AD 257 Dionysius had again to face a judicial inquisition, in this case directed specifically at the leaders of the Church, he had a well-organized community once more behind him. Refusing to undertake not to hold services or gather at the Christian cemeteries, Dionysius was exiled by the Deputy Prefect, Aemilian, to Kufra Oasis, but there he took the opportunity to promote successful missionary work among the inhabitants. More fortunate than Cyprian, he was not recalled to be executed, and in the confusion and civil war that followed the downfall of Valerian in 260, he played an influential part in attempting to

¹ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VI.41.11 (trans. by J. E. L. Oulton).

conciliate the factions that had divided Alexandria like 'a new Red Sea'. When plague broke out, his clergy, like their North African brethren, remained at their posts.

Much of Dionysius's final years as bishop were spent in theological debate. First, he took up the challenge presented by the Sabellians in Cyrenaica, who failed to make any substantial distinction between God the father and God the Son, and then used his influence against Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch, at the opposite extreme of the theological spectrum, who believed that Jesus was essentially man though wholly inspired by the Spirit. In both events he represented effectively the views of his master Origen. Even so, the questions that had been raised remained to be answered by his successors.

Under Dionysius, Alexandria had become the undisputed centre of the Church in Egypt. Already Demetrius had appointed suffragan bishops directly responsible to him, and we find Dionysius disciplining one of these, Nepos of Arsinoë, for maintaining millenarist views of Scripture, an indication perhaps of the survival of the biblical and prophetic tendency in Egyptian Christianity outside Alexandria. In addition, Dionysius introduced a system whereby the date of Easter was announced to all congregations each year in a circular letter from Alexandria. These Festal Letters provided him and his successors with the means of maintaining contact and control of the Christian congregations throughout Egypt and of pronouncing on ecclesiastical and doctrinal themes.

From the death of Dionysius in AD 264 to the outbreak of the Great Persecution forty years later, few facts are known about the Church in Alexandria. Profound changes, however, were beginning to take place in Egyptian society. In 199–200, Septimius Severus had visited Alexandria and perhaps the antiquities of the Nile Valley also, and he had given to Alexandria a city council (*Boulé*) of the provincial municipal type. Elsewhere in Egypt the districts (*nomes*) had been re-organized, and for the first time in their history their chief city was treated like a cantonal capital in other provinces of the empire. By AD 206–7, Oxyrhynchus had been organized into six quarters with their 'tribes' (*phylai*) modelled on those of the city of Rome, whose residents qualified for a monthly corn ration as part of their citizen rights.¹ In AD 212 (or 214), Severus's son, Caracalla, had published in Egypt the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, which extended Roman citizenship to all free

¹ See J. R. Rea, ed., *P. Oxy.*, xl (London, 1972), 7, publishing the Corn Dole archive from Oxyrhynchus (*P. Oxy.*, 2892–2940), dating AD 268–72.

men in the empire except for the comparatively small class of *dediciti*.¹ Though an underlying reason for these reforms may have been to oblige the wealthier inhabitants to undertake the burdens of municipal office and hence to contribute more taxes, they were also a recognition of a blurring of distinctions between the various communities in Egypt and a sign of the province's relative prosperity. In Egypt, as in Roman Africa, two centuries of *pax Romana* had led to the emergence of a predominant town-oriented civilization, represented by a class of medium landowners and merchants who were not unwilling to undertake the administrative services of their district so long as these were honorific enough. In addition, Greek education was being extended progressively into the countryside. Writing a reasonably literate letter and compiling accounts were not the perquisite of a few. Literacy was assumed: illiteracy was specially recorded on official documents. Under the Severi, Egypt shared for once in the general well-being of the empire.

This situation, however, was not destined to last. By the time of the Decian persecution there is an impressive accumulation of evidence showing that the prosperity of the Severian age had become a distant memory. The Egyptian economy was always balanced on a knife-edge. The impossibility of extending the areas under cultivation because of the lack of rainfall and the existence of rock-strewn desert, the fickleness of the annual level of the Nile flood, and the insoluble problem of irrigating land beyond a short distance from the river have plagued Egypt from time immemorial. Now, in addition, the same increases in taxation required to meet mounting external threats that crippled the North African cities also demoralized those in Egypt. The system of liturgies, whereby holders of land found themselves compulsorily qualified to undertake particular administrative office, had always been burdensome. Now it became doubly oppressive. No one wanted to undertake even potentially lucrative offices, such as that of public banker, let alone the more menial positions. No one knew how the old and newly imposed burdens were to be met and, if they were not, arrest, confiscation and beating hung over the heads of the unfortunate

¹ *Papyrus Giessen*, 1.40; for the dating, AD 214, see F. Millar, 'The date of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 1962, 48, 124-31. It is not known who the *dediciti* really were. It is suggested, however, that they included some of the barbarians settled by the emperors within the empire's frontiers. In Egypt, many of the native population did not receive citizenship after Caracalla. See M. I. Rostovtzeff, *The social and economic history of the Roman Empire*, 2nd edn, revised by P. M. Fraser, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1957), 720.

citizens.¹ From the cities, decline spread to the surrounding villages. There is a certain pathos in the plea by the villagers in the nome of Arsinoe to the prefect of Egypt, Appius Sabinus, to be freed from obligations to the town under the terms of an edict of Septimius Severus. The case was brought to the unsympathetic Prefect's court in AD 250.

Serenus [Counsel for the senate of Arsinoe]: 'To the law of Severus, I will say, Severus ordained the law in Egypt while the cities were still prosperous.'

The Prefect: 'The argument from prosperity, or rather the decline from prosperity, is equal both for the villages and the cities.'²

The ignorance of elementary economics was blissful, and the villagers' additional plea that the imposition was a new one which 'the sacred Fortune of Decius Augustus will relieve' was brushed aside. Little wonder that many threw up their holdings in despair. A little later one finds these among the questions put to oracles: 'Am I to become a beggar?', 'Shall I take to flight?', 'Is my flight to end?'³ Flight into the neighbouring desert had been the age-old refuge from oppression in Egypt. By AD 270 this was becoming associated with the religious aspirations of an increasing number of the Egyptian peasants, which were beginning to be reflected in Christianity and its rival, Manichaeism.

Antony's decision to leave his 300-*aroura* holding and adopt an ascetic Christian life was a milestone in the religious history of Egypt. Apart from a few biblical papyri, Christianity has left no trace even on popular Graeco-Egyptian literature during the first three centuries. Combined, however, with the declining prosperity of town and countryside in the mid third century AD, went a growing weakness of Egyptian religion. This was above all rooted in tradition extending back far beyond pharaonic times. Yet as the third century progresses, the lack of its hold on the hearts of the people becomes obvious. The old priestly language of the hieroglyphics was dead. The last emperor recorded in hieroglyphs was Decius in AD 250. While villagers still observed the traditional sacrifices to the gods, they did so, if we are to believe the writer of the *Life of Pachomius*, with decreasing conviction.⁴ Worse was that, in an era of growing misery and stress, temples continued to be used as the

¹ P. Oxy., 1642; compare similar incidents in the period of Diocletian related in P. Oxy., 1415 and 1405, where an entire property was ceded to the imperial fisc to avoid acceptance of an office (probably mid third century).

² See T. C. Skeat and E. P. Wegener, 'Trial before the Prefect of Egypt, Appius Sabinus, AD 250', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 1935, 21, 235-7.

³ P. Oxy., XII.1477 (late third or early fourth century AD).

⁴ *Vita Pachomii*, 3 (= *Patrologia cursus completus, series latina* [PL], 73, cols. 231-2).

centres where taxes were paid. The old Egyptian gods were thus associated not only with the synthetic Graeco-Egyptian cult of Sarapis, a reminder of the era of Egyptian subjection to Macedonian conquerors, but with the increasingly rapacious demands of the Roman overlords. One of the attractions of Antony's community of ascetics was that the 'imprecations of the tax-collectors' were no longer heard.¹

Antony, the son of a Coptic farmer in Upper Egypt, combined a streak of individualism with a strictly biblical idea of Christianity and a consciousness of a distinct Coptic heritage which the new religion could express. Though he had avoided formal schooling, he had absorbed the lessons of the New Testament so that, when his parents died, he literally 'took no thought for the morrow'. He sold his parental farm, placed his sister in an already existing *parthenaion* (convent for women) and established himself as an ascetic not far from his own village. Thence he moved via ancient tombs to an abandoned fort in the mountains east of the Nile where he stayed for about the twenty years AD 285-305. For the Jews, pagans and Christians, the wilderness was traditionally where demons were to be encountered; Antony recalls how his cell was 'filled with the forms of lions, bulls, bears, leopards, serpents and scorpions',² and to these hallucinations was added bodily illness. He was, however, beginning to attract disciples, and at the outbreak of the Great Persecution in AD 303 the 'desert was becoming full of monks'.

In Egypt, as in North Africa, Diocletian's effort to crush Christianity came too late, but the conflict between pagan and Christian lasted nearly a decade and left a deep and permanent impression on Egyptian folk memory. The years leading up to the Great Persecution had witnessed major administrative and fiscal reforms, the revolt of Achilleus in AD 297, the onset of raids by the Blemmyes across the southern frontier, and the massive increase in official control over the daily lives of the inhabitants. Diocletian divided Egypt into three separate provinces and appointed in each a military commander (*dux*), with three or four times as many troops under him as the modest garrison which the prefect had previously commanded. The increase was probably justified on account of the attacks of the Blemmyes, but the rise in the total garrison and the administrative staffs of the provinces meant heavier burdens for the inhabitants. It is in this period that private letters and receipts speak of

¹ 'Life of St Antony', ch. 44. The text is to be found in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia cursus completus, series Graeca* [PG], 26, 835-976. See K. Heussi, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums* (Tübingen, 1936), 78-108.

² Ibid. ch. 9.

supplies in kind (*annona*) being requisitioned for 'the honourable soldiers'. Taxation based on notional assessments of property (*iugatio*) and manpower (*capitatio*) became intolerably heavy, and nomination for municipal office, which involved responsibility for the collection of the quota, was regarded as something to be avoided at all costs and even as a means of paying off old scores against an enemy. A papyrus dated to AD 296 shows also how omnipresent was the hand of the bureaucracy. A smallholder who failed to supply two oxen requisitioned to build a water conduit had to submit an officially verified statement to the effect that one of her beasts had a damaged foot. The owner came from a family of some consequence; what happened to less influential people is not hard to imagine. The unsuccessful revolt of Achilleus seems to have been the outcome.

More important was the psychological effect of these conditions. It is difficult not to see some element of cause and effect in the massive desertion of the traditional gods and the adoption of Christianity by the Copts in the years immediately before the Great Persecution. The historian Eusebius of Caesarea was a contemporary, and he tells how the persecution found Egypt a prey to religious ferment. Once the prime example of the land of idols, its people were now turning in droves to Christ. Eusebius himself witnessed the last violent spasm of persecution in the Thebaid under the Emperor Maximin in AD 311, and described how, despite every form of death and torture inflicted by the authorities on the Christians, churches were replacing altars in the villages of Egypt. The Bible too had been translated into Coptic.

The beginning of the Great Persecution gave little hint of what was to come. One Christian of Oxyrhynchus got a friend to sacrifice in a court case for him. It was a rather unexpected but minor nuisance. The first reaction of Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, had been flight, while in the nomes congregations tried to carry on as usual. In AD 304-5 pressure was gradually increased as churches were dismantled and the laity were being forced to sacrifice. Peter was by now in prison, finding himself at odds with one of his senior bishops, Meletius, Bishop of Lycopolis in the Thebaid, on how the lapsed should be treated at the end of the persecution. So far, the situation had been no worse than under Decius, with some Christians standing firm but many others content either to conform or to use some transparent subterfuge to circumvent the emperor's edict. In the eleven-month pause that followed Diocletian's abdication on 1 May 305, Peter drew up a series of comparatively mild canons with the aim of restoring the lapsed to

communion as smoothly as possible. These were published at Easter 306. Meletius and his followers rejected them and entered on a schism.

The Emperor Maximin, who ruled Egypt first as Caesar under Galerius, and then as Augustus, restarted the persecution during AD 306. The officials he appointed as Prefect of Egypt, such as Sossius Culcianus (305-7) and Hierocles, were convinced pagans. For six years persecution continued, though for some reason Antony and his followers were not molested. Eusebius gives a vivid account of the final stages of what in the Thebaid had by now become a civil war:

And we ourselves also beheld, when we were at these places, many all at once in a single day, some of whom suffered decapitation, others the punishment of fire; so that the murderous axe was dulled and, worn out, was broken in pieces, while the executioners themselves grew utterly weary and took it in turns to succeed one another. It was then that we observed a most marvellous eagerness and a truly divine power and zeal in those who had placed their faith in the Christ of God. Thus, as soon as sentence was given against the first, some from one quarter and others from another would leap up to the tribunal before the judge and confess themselves Christians; paying no heed when faced with terrors and the varied forms of tortures, but undismayedly and boldly speaking of the piety towards the God of the universe, and with joy and laughter and gladness receiving the final sentence of death; so that they sang and sent up hymns and thanksgiving to the God of the universe even to the very last breath.¹

It was not only the rural Christians who suffered. On 25 November 311, Bishop Peter was executed in Alexandria. This terrible time was never forgotten. In Christian Egypt, the Era of Diocletian became known to this day as the Era of the Martyrs.

Events in the West, culminating in Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge on 28 October AD 312, brought relief. Next year Maximin was defeated by Constantine's colleague Licinius, who took over the government of the East and was favourable to Christianity. The aftermath of the ten years of persecution proved at first to be an almost exact parallel to the situation in North Africa. The schism between the followers of Peter and Meletius hardened. Meletius won conspicuous support among the Copts in the Thebaid and a significant amount in the Delta and in Alexandria. There one of his adherents was a learned cleric named Arius. He made his peace with Peter's successor, Achillas, was ordained presbyter, and in a few years rose to be priest in a rich Alexandrian suburb. To Meletius, however, he was a traitor. Seven

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, viii.9.4-5 (trans. by J. E. L. Oulton).

FROM NICAEA TO CHALCEDON

years later, in AD 318/19, his followers brought him down on a charge of heresy.

As we have seen, Origen's theology had its weaknesses. To regard Christ as the link between God and creation may have been intellectually satisfying, but it inevitably raised the question whether Christ belonged to the created order or not, and, if he did so, did he not himself need redemption? This might be an academic question so long as Christian theology remained a matter of debate among Greek-speaking intellectuals schooled in Platonism, but it was a different matter when it became a popular religion among ignorant but fanatical Egyptians, who saw in Christianity release from the threat of demons represented not least by the old gods of Egypt. Christ must be truly God in order to guarantee salvation. The Meletians represented the popular point of view, and Arius laid himself open to attack by claiming that not only was Christ as Divine Word subordinate to God, but that He also 'grew in stature' and was subject to temptation. He was therefore neither fully divine nor fully human. Arius found himself condemned by a council of Egyptian bishops and exiled c. AD 320. For the next four years the conflict simmered. Arius had powerful friends, including the historian Eusebius and another Eusebius, bishop of the capital, Nicomedia; Bishop Alexander of Alexandria was pressed to restore him. Meantime, Licinius, realizing perhaps that conflict with Constantine was inevitable, had turned against Christianity. There was a period of sporadic harassment of Christians in the East, ended only in September 324 when Constantine gained a decisive victory at Chrysopolis on the east side of the Bosphorus and became ruler of the entire Roman world. At once he set about attempting to heal the religious disorders in Egypt caused by Arius's doctrines and the Meletian schism. Early in 325 he summoned at Nicaea an ecumenical council representing the Church in all his dominions. It was designed to settle not only these disputes, but all other outstanding questions that divided the Christian world.

FROM NICAEA TO CHALCEDON

The Council that opened on 20 May AD 325, and sat for a month, was the most significant assembly in the early Church. It had been summoned by the emperor himself, a symbol of the part the civil power was to play in the affairs of the Church in the eastern Roman provinces, and not least in Egypt. After a month of confused debate, Arius and his

followers were condemned. The formula through which the relationship of the Father and the Son was expressed – ‘of the same substance’ (*homoousios*) – satisfied the aspirations of those who believed that salvation could not be guaranteed except through One who was truly God, but was at heart unacceptable to the majority of the Greek-speaking bishops in the eastern Roman world. These insisted that the distinction between God and Christ must somehow be maintained, if the Church was not to accept a statement of faith which could be interpreted no differently from Jewish monotheism. If the popular view found its spokesman in Bishop Alexander’s deacon Athanasius, the eastern bishops also had a measure of right on their side. In addition, the ecclesiastical canons which were agreed by the council put into formal terms the special status of the three leading sees of Christendom – Rome, Alexandria and Antioch. Their right of supervision over the suffragan bishops in the territories under their control was conceded. Alexandria became the head of a vast diocese extending from the borders of Libya to the Nubian frontier. Of Constantinople, still Byzantium, a medium-sized town under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Thrace at Heraclea, there was no mention.

In the history of the Church of Egypt one other incident at the Council was as important as the condemnation of Arius. Constantine went out of his way to greet and embrace the confessor Paphnutius, a Copt and an ascetic bishop who had been cruelly maimed during the persecution. This act symbolized that the empire had taken an entirely new direction, and that the bitter memories of the past could be directed against Constantine’s pagan predecessors alone. It was a shrewd move, too, for it indicated the support the emperor was prepared to give to the ascetics. Monasticism had already found a response among the Egyptian people as no other movement was to do. About AD 320, Amoun, a close friend of Antony, established the first of a number of vast settlements in the mountains of Nitria, south-west of the Delta. About the same time, a discharged soldier named Pakhom (Pachomius) was founding the first organized monastic communities at Tabennissi in Upper Egypt. With the eye of genius, Constantine accepted the ascetics for the power they were. In so doing he turned to the service of the empire what could have been a force as disruptive to it as the North African Circumcellions. There was to be no popular revolt in Egypt, even at the time of the Persian and Arab invasions.

The Meletians had received a fair deal at the Council. By now the Bishop of Lycopolis could claim that he had one bishop in every three

towns in the Thebaid, and one in every six or seven in the Delta, while we learn from papyrus sources of a highly organized Meletian monastic movement. His Church of the Martyrs had not won an outright victory, but it could not be ignored. An arrangement was made that Meletius was to submit to the Bishop of Alexandria once more, retaining his title of bishop but without function, while his bishops were to act as coadjutors to those of Alexander's communion and be eligible for election in their stead as their sees fell vacant. Egypt had had no tradition of schism as had existed in North Africa, and the arrangement was workable provided there was good will. Before this was tested adequately, however, Alexander died (April 328), and in his stead after six weeks of intrigue the deacon Athanasius was elected on 8 June 328.

The bishops had chosen Athanasius as 'an upright man, pious, a Christian and an ascetic'. The last-named quality was vital. Alexandria itself was the object of dislike and envy in the rest of Egypt; no Alexandrian bishop who was not an ascetic could hope to keep the Church in Egypt united. Athanasius soon showed the Meletians and everyone else how he intended unity to be retained. Whatever engagements his predecessor had entered into were thrust aside. The Meletian leaders were treated brutally as Athanasius sought to undermine their hold among the Copts. His outstanding success came in AD 329, when he visited Pachomius's monastery and at a stroke won over his movement to his side. The Pachomian monks were from now on among his devoted supporters. His unceasing activity in the first years of his episcopate determined the future course of his reign. One of the few Greek churchmen who had a working knowledge of Coptic, his visitations throughout his vast diocese gained him authority and respect among the masses of the new Christians among the peasants, but he was opposed bitterly by the remaining Meletian leaders. These found support from Athanasius's theological opponents.

In the decade following Nicaea, the eastern bishops who opposed the *Homoousios* formula had progressively gained the upper hand. In AD 327, a second Council of Nicaea had restored Arius to communion, but not to his office of presbyter, and in the next few years the main supporters of the formulas of the creed of Nicaea had been dismissed from their sees. Constantine, without abrogating the creed he had helped to evolve, had accepted the attitudes of the eastern bishops who dominated his court. By 332 the latter were becoming aware of Athanasius's mistreatment of the Meletians. Constantine himself was anxious to see Christendom finally united by the restoration of Arius to his former

position. On both these issues Athanasius was adamant. In 334 he outwitted an inquiry meeting at Caesarea in Palestine to investigate allegations that he had murdered a Meletian bishop named Arsenius. Arsenius had merely been kidnapped and manhandled and was produced alive at the meeting. Next year, however, the coalition of his opponents proved too strong. A commission visited Egypt, and reported to a major council assembled at Tyre that Athanasius had used violence against the Meletians and that his election as bishop was void. The findings were accepted. In September 335, Athanasius was condemned to deprivation of his see. A dramatic appeal to the emperor failed. Athanasius was exiled to Trier, where he remained until Constantine's death. Meanwhile Arius had died (perhaps by poisoning) in 336, on the very day before he was to be restored solemnly to the presbyterate.

Constantine's acceptance of Christianity had meant more than that Christianity was to be the religion of the Roman empire. He had used his adopted faith as part of a vigorous diplomatic offensive among the client kingdoms on the eastern borders of the empire and as a lever against the Persians. His subjects had been quick to follow his example. Whereas the expansion of Christianity in North Africa was blocked by the Sahara desert, Alexandria was the terminus for the whole of Rome's seaborne trade with Arabia and further east. Along this trade-route merchants began to spread the Christian faith, especially to the Himyarites in southern Arabia and the Ethiopians through their port at Adulis (Massawa). The story of Frumentius's success in Ethiopia illustrates the energy with which Christianity was being propagated along the trade-routes frequented by Roman merchants at this period. (See chapter 4.)

Athanasius's consecration of Frumentius ensured Alexandria's permanent interest in missions beyond the southern frontier of the empire. In future the *abuna*, or metropolitan, of Ethiopia would be seeking consecration at the hands of the patriarch of Alexandria. From the sixth to the end of the fourteenth century at least, his colleagues in the Nubian Christian kingdoms would be doing likewise.¹ Much though Constantine II might protest to the King of Aksum in AD 357 that the religious unity of mankind was determined by the religion of the emperor, Athanasius's appointment of Frumentius was accepted, and he won thereby a permanent place for the see of Alexandria in African Christianity. Of equal importance in the history of the Church

¹ For the discovery of the body of Bishop Timotheos at Qasr Ibrim and his title-deed of consecration showing that he had been consecrated Bishop of Pachoras (Faras) and Tilbye (Ibrim) by the Patriarch Gabriel IV (1372-80) at Old Cairo, see J. M. Plumley, *The scrolls of Bishop Timotheos found at Q'asr Ibrim*, Egypt Exploration Society monograph (London, 1975).

in Egypt was Athanasius's binding friendship with the monastic leaders, through which an alliance was forged between the Alexandrian bishopric and the new force of monasticism. At first sight there would seem to be no logical connection between the biblical religion of the Coptic monks and the Greek philosophical Christianity of the bishops of Alexandria. Had the Meletians produced a leader of Athanasius's calibre, the alliance would have been severely tested. As it was, the Meletian threat faded, though the sect survived in Upper Egypt until the arrival of the Arabs. Antony and Pachomius remained Athanasius's firm allies, and Antony's bequest of his sheepskin cloak to the bishop sealed what became a permanent relationship. When in 346 Athanasius returned from exile, the tumultuous welcome he received alike from the Alexandrian magistrate and the Coptic monks showed that henceforth the bishop of Alexandria would be Egypt's new Pharaoh.

In the succeeding decade Athanasius consolidated his position. His theology was gradually refined and made just flexible enough to attract the adherence of some of his Origenist opponents. His third exile in AD 356 only increased his popularity. When Julian entered on the scene as emperor at the end of 361, he found Athanasius an insuperable stumbling block to the success of his pagan reaction. In 362 Athanasius held one of the most significant of many theological synods at Alexandria. Many Origenist bishops and the leaders of the main parties in the see of Antioch accepted his leadership and the Nicene formula. The day was won for *Homoousios*. From now on until he died in May 373, Athanasius's position was unchallengable throughout the whole of Christendom from Aksum to the shores of Britain. Alexandria was the leader of Christianity in the East.

With the accession of Theodosius I as emperor in January AD 379, a change took place in the fortunes of Alexandria. Theodosius was a westerner and strongly Nicene, and he was determined to unite the empire under Nicene orthodoxy as understood by Rome and Alexandria. But new factors in the form of the greatly enhanced importance of the see of the capital city and the new-found orthodoxy of Antioch were beginning to come into the reckoning. The Second Ecumenical Council, which Theodosius convoked at Constantinople in 381 to set the seal on the Nicene orthodoxy, was presided over first by Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, to whom Athanasius had refused communion, and, on Meletius's death during the session, by Gregory Nazianzen, who had been brought to the capital to establish himself as orthodox bishop there. The Egyptians were affronted, and attempted in vain to impose

their own nominee as bishop of Constantinople. Their interference in the affairs of Constantinople was resented and censured implicitly in the second Canon. While the patriarchal rights of Alexandria were safeguarded by the Council, rather incidentally the third Canon declared 'however [*mentoi*], the Bishop of Constantinople has the primacy of honour after the Bishop of Rome, because Constantinople is new Rome'. For Theodosius and his advisers, this arrangement seemed impeccable. The capital of the empire was now Constantine's city and it naturally acquired the religious and secular prerogatives of the former capital. Rome was one, and the only difference between Old and New Rome was a difference of precedence; but New Rome was superior to all other sees. For Alexandria, however, as for Rome itself, this was a gross affront. It undermined the authority of the Council of Nicaea, for at that time Constantinople, i.e. Byzantium, was a bishopric under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Thrace, and it had no claim to apostolic foundation. To wipe out the effect of this decision became the main objective of the bishops of Alexandria for the next seventy years. In this aim they were seconded by the Popes of Rome.

Inevitably in Greek-speaking eastern Christendom, the issue would be fought out largely within the framework of metaphysical debate. Acceptance of the credal statements of Nicaea did not end doctrinal differences among the major eastern sees, and Alexandria, Antioch and Constantinople represented different standpoints. If Christ was acknowledged as 'of one substance with the Father' and therefore divine, how was he also to be 'of one substance with man', and capable of sharing human experiences in order to redeem man? While Athanasius had been battling with his opponents over Trinitarian orthodoxy, this issue had fallen into the background. At the Council of Alexandria in AD 362, however, it had been raised by rival delegations from Antioch. Athanasius again rose to the occasion. He condemned those who believed that the Divine Word had been present in Christ in the same manner as it had in the prophets (i.e. as Paul of Samosata was believed to have taught), but he did not show how Christ as redeemer was also consubstantial with man, contenting himself with a bare assertion of His 'full humanity'. His great prestige preserved him from awkward questions. Within a few years, one of his disciples, Apollinarius, Bishop of Laodicea in Syria (c. 310-90), attempted to answer these for him. Apollinarius maintained that the rational soul, or the governing element in each human being, had been replaced in Christ by the divine Word. There was no distinction in Scripture he argued, between

the Word and his flesh (compare John 1:14). Christ was one nature (*physis*), one individuality (*hypostasis*) and one person (*prosopon*) at once wholly God and wholly man. The phrase, 'the one incarnate nature of the Word', evolved by Apollinarius in the 370s, was to become the watchword of the Alexandrian bishops of the fifth century and thence of the Monophysite Christians in the Nile Valley and Ethiopia.

The shift of the theological debate from Trinitarian to Christological issues confronted Athanasius's successors with the same problem of reconciling the broad masses of Egyptian Christians with their own sophisticated reasoning as had confronted Athanasius himself. Theophilus (AD 398-412) and Cyril (412-44) were able to surmount these crises largely because they could refer doubters to the prestige and success of Athanasius. In addition, the great majority of Egyptian Christians identified themselves with the see of Alexandria and were prepared to give articulate support to its leaders. The ambitions of these now extended to vindicating their superiority over Constantinople and Antioch and to asserting a position approaching equality with Rome.

In Egypt itself the key factor was the attitude of the monks, who could provide the massive and terrifying popular support to the Alexandrian bishops which made their cause well-nigh invincible in the first half of the fifth century. By AD 400 monasticism had exploded into a vast popular movement. Writing from Palestine, Jerome affirmed that nearly 50,000 Pachomian monks attended the annual assembly of their order at Tabennissi. At Oxyrhynchus, the whole town, according to Rufinus (c. 390), who visited the area, had been taken over by the monks. There were he said some 10,000 around the city. Many Pachomian monasteries had become self-sufficient economic units. Palladius's description of Panopolis enumerates the trades to be found among 300 monks there. There were fifteen tailors, seven smiths, four carpenters, fifteen fullers, twelve camel-drivers, 'and every type of craft, and with their surplus output they provide for the needs of the women's convent and the prisons'.¹ The monasteries were by now vast welfare centres affording protection against the storms of economic calamity and the perils of barbarian raiders from the desert. Their inhabitants, because of the aura of sanctity that attached to their vocation, were effectively beyond the reach of the tax-collector and even the law.

How had this situation arisen? Documentary evidence from papyri

¹ Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca*, xxxii.9 (ed. by C. Butler, Cambridge, 1898). For monks engaged in milling and irrigation at Shenute's White Monastery in the fifth century, see Besa, *Life of Shenute*, chs. 17 and 24 (ed. by H. Wiesman, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, *Scriptores Coptici*, II.4, Paris, 1931).

for economic conditions in rural Egypt is relatively abundant. It shows a relentless decline in the position of the rural proprietor, who had provided an age-long stability to Egyptian society in face of economic pressure and external threats. In the reign of Constantine, peasant proprietors were still very numerous and the bulk of the soil of Egypt was held by them. At Hermopolis, south of Oxyrhynchus, it seems that only about one-sixth of the total of 400,000 *arourae* (an *aroura* was about $\frac{1}{3}$ hectare) in the city territory was held by urban landowners and the remainder by villagers.¹ At Theadelphia in AD 332, the total taxable area of the village was 500 *arourae*, and of these only two holdings of 30 *arourae* each were held by urban landowners. The remainder was held by 23 villagers whose holdings were even less extensive.² On this reckoning even Antony's holding of 300 *arourae* must be accounted very considerable. Throughout the century there was a steady shift towards larger units as more and more of the former public land was assigned to those who were prepared to farm it. With the emergence of a class of larger landowners went the tendency of villagers to put themselves under the protection of these as a safeguard against extortionate tax-gatherers or the oppressive official demands for labour services. Those who were unlucky were faced with the alternatives of flight, ruin or peonage. By the end of the century Egypt had become the classic land of patronage, as an increasing number of villagers chose to become labourers (*coloni*) on some larger estate where an owner would provide them with protection and the means of eking out their existence. Only the more powerful could escape the effects of the periodical assessments (*indictiones*). The law of 415, *De Patrocinii vicorum*, shows how high officials and officers were joining in the racket.³ Orders that the 'very name of patronage should become extinct', and that patrons who had acquired clients since 397, the date of the last prohibition, were to stand trial before the Augustal prefect, fell on deaf ears. Even in this apparently complete ban on patronage, the Church of Alexandria was allowed to retain its client villages so long as the villagers paid all their taxes and performed all due services. Thus the growth of monastic settlements, which to all intents and purposes were communities of villagers enjoying some freedom from official exploitation, was to be expected. By

¹ See A. H. M. Jones, 'Census records of the later Roman Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1963, 43, 59-60, 63-4.

² One of the twelve peasants listed owned 58 $\frac{1}{2}$ *arourae*, but six had holdings ranging from 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *arourae*. For the Theadelphia register, see *Papyrus Princeton*, 134, analysed by Jones in 'Census records', 63-4, and in Jones, *The later Roman Empire*, II (Oxford, 1964), 773.

³ *Codex Theodosianus*, XI, 24.6.

AD 400 or even earlier, rural Egypt had become almost entirely Christian, the pagan population being confined mainly to members of the Hellenized urban aristocracies for whom the monks had little love. The Christian Church formed a vast privileged corporation, powered by the clergy of Alexandria, whose sources of wealth included a stake in sea and river trading enterprises which extended to include the provisioning of Constantinople. From bishop to the humblest Coptic monk, all had an interest in the continued prosperity of the Church of Alexandria, even if the price was unquestioning obedience to its bishop.

The monasteries, however, still needed careful handling. In 401, Theophilus of Alexandria found himself embroiled with John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, because some monks of Nitria in the desert south-west of Alexandria had laid a complaint against him at the capital. Theophilus eventually manoeuvred himself into the position of accuser and, cheered on by Egyptian sailors in the port of Constantinople, he humiliated John at the Synod of the Oak in 403. The incident showed, however, that the support of the monks must be won and not assumed.

The first clash between Alexandria and Constantinople resulted in John Chrysostom's exile in AD 404 and his death three years later. Theophilus could not, however, influence the choice of a new bishop of Constantinople. For nearly a quarter of a century an equilibrium was maintained between Alexandria and Constantinople. Then, following a disputed election of a patriarch of Constantinople, the Emperor Theodosius II summoned Nestorius, a presbyter in the Church of Antioch, to the capital, and had him consecrated bishop in April 428. Nestorius was a bad choice. He was headstrong and impulsive, garrulous and limited in his intellectual training, and he represented to an extreme degree the theological tradition opposed to that of Alexandria. Concerning Christ, the Antiochenes tended to emphasize the humanity of the Saviour and to affirm the reality of the human nature existing within Christ alongside the Godhead. To them Christ existed 'in two natures'. Either being ignorant, or not caring about Alexandrian theology, Nestorius began to preach his views uncompromisingly, in particular to reject the term *Theotokos* ('God-bearing') as applied to the Virgin Mary. He said this was inappropriate because what the Virgin bore was the manhood and not the Godhead of Christ. Meantime, in Alexandria Theophilus had been succeeded by his nephew Cyril (412-44), a violent individual if a deep-thinking theologian, who for years had been working out the theology of the unity of the Godhead and humanity of

the Incarnate Christ. Christ was indeed 'of two natures', Godhead and manhood, but the Incarnation resulted in the Word being 'made flesh' (John 1:14) in a complete union of essential natures and not, as the Antiochenes asserted, joined to the nature of a human being; hence in Cyril's view the term *Theotokos* was the proper one to apply to Mary, and the formula 'in two natures' was unacceptable.

Cyril was as ruthless and dedicated to the ambitions of his see as his uncle Theophilus had been, and he also realized the need of consolidating Egyptian monastic opinion on his side. The monks doubted the biblical justification for the term *Theotokos*. When early in 429 he found himself set on a collision course with Nestorius, Cyril sent the monks a full and shrewd account of his theological position and, without being able to point to a single scriptural proof text, assured them that Athanasius would have approved. If Christ was merely 'an instrument of God' as Nestorius claimed, how could he overthrow death and ensure their own victory over the demons?¹ The medicine worked. With a mixture of sincere attachment to a theological position, energy, guile and aggression, Cyril was able to obtain the summons by the emperor of a Council at Ephesus in June 431, at which he was in the position to act both as papal plenipotentiary and accuser and judge of Nestorius. By the evening of 22 June, the latter had been deposed as 'the new Judas', and the crowds in Ephesus were dancing their acclaim of Cyril and his vindication of Mary as *Theotokos*.

Alexandria had triumphed once more over Constantinople. Cyril was now 'archbishop' and 'patriarch', but his triumph was not complete. In the later stages of his controversy with Nestorius, he had required the latter to assent to twelve propositions, which came to be known as the Twelve Anathemas. These Anathemas revealed that Cyril came near to accepting the Christological theses of Apollinarius, by insisting on a union of essence (a *hypostatic* union) between the Word and the manhood of Christ, and so confusing the body of Christ and the Divine Word that dwelt in it. These Anathemas were not accepted by the Council of Ephesus, but they remained in the forefront of popular Egyptian Christology. In 433 Cyril was obliged by the emperor to make his peace with the Antiochenes, and in the Formula of Reunion to accept an affirmation of the 'two natures' of Christ without seeking to define their relationship further.

Under Cyril, the see of Alexandria reached the height of its power. It was enormously wealthy; even after dispensing massive bribes to

¹ Cyril, *Ep.* 1 (PG 77, col. 36).

members of the imperial Court, Cyril still bequeathed a private fortune amounting to 635 kgs of gold; he had complete authority over the bishops throughout a great area extending from Cyrenaica to the First Cataract; and the monks were his loyal supporters. Above all, Alexandria appeared to have the alliance of the Roman see, though sooner or later the clash between their respective claims in ecclesiastical jurisdiction and theology would have put a heavy strain on their relations. By failing to leave well alone, Cyril's successor, Dioscorus (444-51), wrecked this achievement and forced Alexandria into an ecclesiastical and theological isolation whence it was never entirely to emerge.

Dioscorus aimed at asserting the full range of Cyril's theology as the orthodoxy of Christendom against the Antiochenes, and at humbling for all time his rival at Constantinople. In carrying out these aims he had considerable advantages. Popular Christianity in the East instinctively accepted Cyril's theology, and the Emperor Theodosius II, profiting from his experiences with Nestorius, had put his authority behind it. Dioscorus also had the support of a considerable body of monastic opinion in Syria and in the capital, whose chief representative, the archimandrite Eutyches, presided over a monastery of 300 monks. On the other hand, his opponents, Domnus, Patriarch of Antioch, and Flavian, the patriarch of the capital, were weak men whose personal situations were insecure. Leo at Rome was powerful, but distant from the scene of action.

Once again Alexandria appeared to triumph, when Flavian had Eutyches deposed by a Council in Constantinople (November AD 448). Eutyches, supported by the court, appealed to the major sees of Christendom and, in March 449, the emperor summoned a judicial assembly of about 130 bishops to meet at Ephesus in August under Dioscorus's presidency. There, amid scenes of violence and disorder, Flavian, Domnus and their supporters were deposed and Eutyches restored to office. The theology of Cyril, stated uncompromisingly in the Twelve Anathemas, became the creed of Christendom. Christ must be acknowledged as One Incarnate Nature. A long papal statement, written to Flavian in June 449, known as the *Tome* of Leo, which affirmed the two natures of Christ, was ignored. Alexandria was hailed as 'city of the orthodox' and Dioscorus as 'oecumenical patriarch'. For a brief moment the leadership of Christendom was in his hands.

Until Theodosius II died on 28 July 450, as the result of a hunting accident, Dioscorus was supreme. There were, however, three serious weaknesses in his position. First, it relied heavily on the favour of the

Byzantine court, and Theodosius II was replaced by the pro-western Marcian (450-7), who married the Augusta, Pulcheria, who had been consistently hostile to Dioscorus. Secondly, he had mortally offended Pope Leo, and thus at a stroke he destroyed the long-standing alliance between Rome and Alexandria. Thirdly, if he was a faithful representative of Cyril's theology, he had a profound dislike for Cyril's relatives. His treatment of one of these aroused deep hostility in Alexandria, and denied him much-needed support when he faced his opponents at the Council of Chalcedon in October 451.

Marcian and Pulcheria had at once set about undoing Dioscorus's work. A new general Council, with the object of confirming the faith, was summoned to meet at Chalcedon on the Bosphorus opposite Constantinople in October 451. Over 500 bishops participated. Dioscorus was cornered. He was deposed from his bishopric, not indeed as a heretic, but because of his defiance of Pope Leo and his misdeeds towards some of his clergy. Eutyches was also condemned again, and the faith of Christendom defined in a manner acceptable to the papal legates, that Christ was to be acknowledged 'in two natures inseparably united', each sharing the characteristics of the other. 'Cyril and Leo taught alike', cried the assembled bishops in their joy at the downfall of 'Pharaoh'. The story of the relations between the major centres of Christianity in the Mediterranean in the next two centuries would demonstrate that they did not.

Alexandria had been humbled. It is often believed that its stubborn adherence to the One-nature or 'Monophysite' Christology from then on was the reflection of Egyptian nationalist sentiment directed against the ecclesiastical and civil domination of Constantinople. This is only partly true. More than any other province, Egypt had developed a sense of unity. The vast majority of its people, apart from the inhabitants of Alexandria itself, depended on the Nile. The Coptic language, also, gave the Egyptian Christian a strong sense of self-identity, which was reflected in the attitude of some of the monks towards outsiders. Even so, there was little trace of national pride among the Christians at this time. If such pride existed, it was expressed by Greek-speaking pagans, people such as Horappolon (c. 480), who researched learnedly into the Egyptian past and perhaps into the meaning of the hieroglyphs. Many Egyptian Christians wanted to do nothing better than forget their heritage, even to the point of changing their names from Egyptian ones to those derived from Old Testament prophets. A frequent contrast among monks and holy men was between 'Egyptians' (i.e. worldly

mind and idolatrous-hearted individuals) and 'those from Jerusalem' – the true Christians.¹

The monks contributed most towards providing the Coptic Christian peasant with a self-conscious sense of identity during the fifth century. There was always tension between them and the remnants of the old Hellenized pagan aristocracy. Throughout the first half of the fifth century AD, the monks were led by a remarkable man who possessed something of the charisma of a prophet but combined with practical hard-headedness. This was Shenute, abbot of the great Pachomian White Monastery at Atripe, with over 2,000 monks and 1,800 nuns, from c. 385 to his death in 451. A Copt, impatient of the shortcomings of his fellow monks and laymen, he none the less reserved the venom of his highly coloured sermons for the Greek-speaking local aristocracy in the neighbouring town of Panopolis. In his *Life*, attributed to his disciple Besa, he is recorded as on one occasion having the holdings of landowners on an island in the Nile sunk beneath the waters on the grounds that they were charging their tenants extortionate rents. Fanatically loyal to the cause of Cyril against Nestorius and his allies, Shenute's eloquence and concern for the downtrodden and needy fired the imagination of the Copts. His monasticism gave them a new status, a place in Christian society and an assurance of personal salvation. He stands in the succession of Antony and Pachomius, and was responsible more than any other figure for uniting Cyril's theology with a popular movement among the Coptic peasantry which it was always to retain. It was not a movement, however, directed against 'the God-loving emperors' at Constantinople. Until all hope had vanished that the empire would accept the Alexandrian theology as the norm of orthodoxy, the Copt was loyal to the Byzantine state.

The news of Dioscorus's downfall in 451 and of the acceptance of the Definition of Chalcedon was received with angry shock in Alexandria. There were riots, and only the rapid despatch of troops from Constantinople restored the situation. However, the Church was divided. At Chalcedon itself, four out of the seventeen Egyptian bishops who had accompanied Dioscorus had acquiesced in their master's deposition and signed the Definition. Before returning, they had consecrated Proterius, Dioscorus's trusted presbyter, as patriarch. Proterius eventually won the support of fifteen bishops, a section of the Pachomian

¹ Thus Zacharias Scholasticus's description of the Egyptian monk, Isaiah, 'cum corpore Aegyptius et animae autem nobilitate Hierosolymitanus'; 'Vitae virorum apud Monophysitarum celeberrimorum', ed. and trans. by E. W. Brooks, *Corp. Script. Cbrist. Orient.*, Scriptores Syri, III.25 (Paris, 1907). Compare Palladius, *Hist. Lausiaca*, XXI (Butler edn p. 66).

monks, and influential minorities in some of the Egyptian towns, including Oxyrhynchus. However, the majority of the monks and the Alexandrian populace were against him. Even Dioscorus's death in exile at Gangra in September 454 made little difference to his position. In August 455, the Emperor Marcian himself wrote to the Prefect of Egypt complaining that Alexandria and Egypt alike were a prey to the heresies of Eutyches and Apollinarius.

The revolution was not long delayed. Marcian died on 26 January AD 457. By mid February this was known in Alexandria. At once a committee of dissident monks was formed. On 16 March, one of Cyril's presbyters, Timothy 'the Cat', who had been removed from office by Proterius, was consecrated bishop. While the new emperor, Leo I, wavered, the mob acted. On Maundy Thursday, 18 March, Proterius was lynched. The immediate upshot was a schism within the Egyptian Church, for the Proterian succession was maintained through another Timothy, 'Wobble-cap', but no attempt was made by Timothy the Cat to form a Church out of communion with the Church in Constantinople. The horror caused by the events in Alexandria, however, made his recognition as legitimate Patriarch impossible. Following a 'plebiscite' of the entire eastern episcopate in 458, Leo decreed that Timothy was unworthy of his office and ordered him into exile, where he was destined to remain, first at Gangra, then in the Crimean town of Cherson, until a new round of events in Constantinople provided him with a chance to assert his claims once more.

These events were the death of Leo in January 474, after a reign of seventeen years, and, after the brief reign of Leo II, the accession of the Isaurian warrior-chief Zeno (November 474). This was followed, however, by the latter's expulsion as the result of a revolution in favour of the dowager-empress's brother, Basiliscus (9 January 475). Basiliscus committed himself strongly to the Alexandrian cause. Timothy the Cat was recalled from exile. Timothy represented the first generation of Egyptian Monophysitism. His aim was to secure the emperor's rejection of Chalcedon and the restoration of the *status quo ante* the death of Theodosius II. He was prepared to condemn Eutyches along with Pope Leo's *Tome* and the Council of Chalcedon. Basiliscus was ready to accept most of this; an imperial encyclical of August 475 informed all bishops under his jurisdiction that the faith consisted of the creed of Nicaea confirmed by the doctrine of the Council of Constantinople (381) and both Councils of Ephesus (431 and 449), and that the *Tome* of Leo and the 'innovations' of Chalcedon were to be rejected. The Alexandrian

triumph was checked by Acacius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who saw through Timothy's ambitions and the danger they presented to his own see. In August 476, however, Zeno was restored by a counter-revolution, and Timothy was again under threat of exile when he died in July 477.

Alexandria had shown that its chosen leader was a power to be reckoned with. Zeno and Acacius accepted the inevitable and on 28 July 482, in a letter addressed to Timothy's successor, Peter Mongus (477-90), and to 'the bishops, monks and laymen of Alexandria, Egypt and Cyrenaica', set out the terms of a compromise. The letter, known to history as the *Henotikon* ('Edict of Unity'), went as near as possible to meet the Alexandrian requirements without actually denouncing the Council of Chalcedon. Orthodoxy was affirmed as the creed of Nicaea, confirmed at Constantinople and Ephesus I, but Cyril's Twelve Anathemas were accepted as canonical. Christ, affirmed to be consubstantial with both God and man, 'incarnate from the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin *Theotokos*, was one and not two'. Nestorius and Eutyches were condemned. The emperor invited all churches to reunite in agreement. The *Henotikon* was a masterpiece of drafting, allowing each side to accept just as much as it wanted from the text, and it had partial success. Peter Mongus was under constant pressure from a formidable body of dissident monks to accept nothing less than the denunciation of both the *Tome* and Chalcedon. To retain his position he was obliged to do this, but he was none the less able to maintain communion with Constantinople. No successor was appointed to continue the Chalcedonian line of bishops in Alexandria. In the capital, however, Acacius found himself embroiled with the papacy, who regarded the restoration of communion with Peter Mongus as outrageous. In 484 Acacius was excommunicated by Pope Felix III, and the Acacian schism dividing Rome from Constantinople and the other eastern patriarchates lasted for the next thirty-five years.

In this period, covered by the reigns of Zeno (died AD 491) and Anastasius (491-518), the Egyptians were not unduly perturbed by the schism with Rome. They remained in communion with Constantinople on their own terms. The Chalcedonian Church shrank almost to nothing. Peter Mongus died in 490 and his successors, Athanasius II and John I and II, left little mark on history, for little happened to threaten their security. By this time power in the countryside was shared between the great landowners and the monasteries. The authorities had lost their battle over patronage. Huge estates had been amassed.

The municipal administration had been replaced by the more local and less powerful pagarchies. Members of the family of Flavius Apion, who was the Emperor Anastasius's quartermaster-general in the Persian campaign of 502-5, owned about two-fifths of the acreage of the combined city territories of Oxyrhynchus and Cynopolis (112,000 out of 280,000 *arourae*), and they were not the only great landowners who had replaced the peasant proprietors and urban landowners of former days. An army of agents, hierarchically graded like members of an official bureaucracy, farmed their estates. They maintained their own police and postal service and a private army of retainers (*bucellarii*). Their cultivators paid their rents and worked in gangs under foremen; all resemblance of personal freedom had been lost.

Some of the larger monasteries organized themselves in the same way. They also acted as agricultural corporations, had their *coloni* and retainers, and they found patrons valuable. One such was the Count John, who seems to have looked after the interests of the Pachomian monastery of Stratonikis. These houses often possessed very large properties. The vast estates of Shenute's White Monastery may have been exceptional, but many had become corporations owning villages whose inhabitants leased from the monastery their equipment for ploughing and for irrigating vineyards, and whose work was supervised by monastic officials. In the Delta, the Metanoia monastery, which seems to have been the Mother-house of the Pachomians in northern Egypt, had its own fleet of boats administered by monastic stewards. We hear of these receiving a grant of grain from the revenues of the village of Aphrodite, perhaps a benefaction from the Emperor Zeno. In Egypt, the era of Zeno and Anastasius seems to have been something of a golden age for the great landowner whether lay or monastic. For the latter, wealth accumulated at an enormous rate through benefactions. Money was left to them for 'the redemption of captives' or simply for the good of the soul. In addition, centres of pilgrimage such as the shrine of St Menas near Alexandria, also endowed by Zeno, became a sort of Lourdes of the Byzantine world. Water from its holy spring was exported in special pilgrim flasks stamped with the saint's name. Little wonder that in 505 the newly elected Patriarch John II of Nikiou could offer the emperor Anastasius 900 kgs of gold in return for his complete rejection of the Council of Chalcedon. The offer was refused, but, for all its imperfections, the *Henotikon* of Zeno had brought religious peace to the Byzantine empire and particularly to Egypt.

In these years, Egyptian Monophysitism became a missionary movement, concentrating on the trade-routes leading from Alexandria down the Red Sea towards the Horn of Africa. About AD 502 missionaries known as the Nine Saints arrived in Ethiopia, whose Church already had close links with Alexandria. To judge from their names, they included Syrians as well as Egyptians. They set about restoring and extending monastic Christianity of the coenobitic Pachomian type, establishing the great monastery of Debre Damo on a hill overlooking the capital, Aksum. A start, if no more, was made at translating the Scriptures into Ge'ez, the language of northern Ethiopia. These missionaries gave a great impetus to the spread of Christianity though the Ethiopian highlands, and also to its zealous acceptance by the reigning house. In 523-4, the King of Ethiopia took an army across the Red Sea into the kingdom of the Himyarites to avenge the persecution of the Christians there.

By the end of the reign of Anastasius, the Monophysite tradition interpreted by Dioscorus's successors had become part of the Egyptian heritage, to be guarded jealously against all outside interference. An instance of this occurred in 516, when the Patriarch John II died and Peter Mongus's nephew, Dioscorus II, was consecrated in his place. Rightly or wrongly, the populace of Alexandria suspected the hand of the imperial officials in this election, and though Dioscorus had an impeccable Monophysite background and the Emperor Anastasius favoured the same outlook, there was strong opposition. In the ensuing riot in Alexandria, the Augustal Prefect of Egypt, Theodosius, was set upon and killed 'because', as the chronicler Theophanes said, 'he praised the emperor'.¹ The Alexandrians thought there was no city like their own, and their chauvinism, allied with the unbreakable loyalty of the Copts to the symbol of Cyril and its representatives, had combined to convert Monophysitism into a national creed. The aim of its leaders, however, remained that it should become accepted as the religion of Constantinople and the empire as a whole.

This hope was shattered in the religious revolution that followed the death of Anastasius in July 518. The new ruler, Justin I (518-27), was a native of one of the few remaining Latin-speaking provinces of the empire and a westerner in outlook. From the start of his reign he saw his duty as the restoration of communion between Constantinople and Rome, and he was willing to pay a high price for this. A clean sweep was made of the Monophysite leaders who in the latter years of Anastasius's

¹ Theophanes, *Chronicon*, A. M. 6009 (ed. by J. Claassen, Bonn, 1839-41, I, 251).

reign had come to occupy key positions in the eastern episcopate. Some, like Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, and his colleague and, later, adversary, Julian of Halicarnassus in the province of Caria in Asia Minor, found refuge in Alexandria. There they found also that 'all Egypt was ready to do battle for the Monophysite belief',¹ and Justin was wise enough not to put that resolve to the test.

Justin was succeeded on 1 August 527 by his nephew, Justinian, who had been at his elbow as unofficial co-adjutor for the previous seven years. His basic aim was to reunite the empire as it had been in the days of Constantine and Theodosius. This involved the overthrow of the Germanic kingdoms in Italy, Africa and even Spain, and a strict alliance with the Pope. How these aims could be reconciled with the need to maintain the loyalty of the Syrian and Egyptian Monophysites was to be the test of Justinian's statesmanship. He failed because it was an aim impossible to fulfil.

At Alexandria, Dioscorus II had died in October 517. His successor, Timothy III (517-35), was left undisturbed by both Justin and Justinian. His rule, however, was not uneventful, and witnessed the emergence of two separate issues which were to leave their mark on Byzantine Christianity in Africa. Both arose from the fact that with the presence there of Severus as an exile, Alexandria became the centre of a standing Monophysite council which the ex-patriarch of Antioch formed in his effort to keep contact with his vast diocese. The main administrative problem confronting him was the diminishing number of clergy faithful to his cause. By 530 the persecution initiated by Justin after the formal ending of the Acacian Schism in 519 had been continuing for a decade, and the Monophysites faced a crisis. With great reluctance Severus and his friends authorized John, Bishop of Tella in eastern Syria, to ordain likely candidates as priests and deacons. As he went from place to place through provinces of the Oriental diocese he found the response overwhelming. It was 'like a river bursting its banks', so great was the flood of ordinands.² Within a few months a new priesthood owing nothing to the Chalcedonian hierarchy had come into being. It had taken seventy years after Chalcedon for the foundations of a separate Monophysite Church to be laid, but now that this had been done, it would only be a matter of time before the Churches in Africa under the lead of Alexandria developed their own hierarchies independent of Constantinople.

¹ Severus, *Select letters*, v.11 (ed. by E. W. Brooks, London, 1902-4, 328).

² Thus John of Ephesus, *Lives of the eastern saints* (ed. by E. W. Brooks, *Patrologia Orientalis* [PO], 18, 518).

The second question was doctrinal. The Monophysite doctrine in the hands of Timothy the Cat and Severus was simply a development of Cyril's theology, including the Twelve Anathemas. Christ was consubstantial with the Father as God, and with man, but His humanity was joined to the Deity in one person and one nature. Any suggestion of 'two natures', however united, was condemned. But Severus maintained that through voluntary self-emptying (*Kenosis*), Christ had become completely man, subject to all man's experiences, sin excepted. He had hungered and thirsted for man's sake, and he had also tasted death. On this last point, however, Severus was challenged by his colleague in exile, Julian of Halicarnassus, who maintained that Christ's body could not be corruptible, because if it were, it would have been liable to sin as well. It was useless for mankind to worship that which could be corrupted. The argument spread beyond the scope of exchanging increasingly angry letters and treatises. The latent pro-Eutychist wing of the Egyptian monks saw Julian's doctrine as the answer to their difficulties. Very soon Julianist missionaries were taking his teaching to wherever Monophysitism was strong, particularly to Armenia and Ethiopia.

Timothy's death in February AD 535 provided what proved to be the last chance for the Monophysites to follow their previous policy and make their creed that of the empire. First, however, in Alexandria there were scenes that recalled the riots that accompanied Dioscorus II's election in 516. The Empress Theodora, strongly Monophysite in her leanings, secured the consecration of the deacon Theodosius with the support of the senior imperial officials in Egypt. The popular reaction was immediate. An opposition candidate, the archdeacon Gaius, who was a strong supporter of Julianism, was consecrated as a rival bishop. Apart from the monks, support came from 'some of the clergy, the landowners of the city, the guilds, the soldiers, the nobles and the whole province', we are told by a contemporary but North African historian, Liberatus of Carthage.¹ Once again, a cross-section of Egyptian society had supported the candidate to the patriarchate who was not the government's choice. Once again, force had to be used to oust the dissident (May 535).

Theodosius, however, survived his inauspicious start and was destined at the end of thirty years' rule to be one of the most influential figures in Monophysitism. Within a few months of the removal of his rival a strange situation had arisen in the capital. The Patriarch Anthimus

¹ *Breviarum causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum*, xx, in PL, 68, col. 1037a.

(535-6) had come to the conclusion that the One Nature Christology was truer than the Chalcedonian Definition, and had entered into communion with Severus and Theodosius. For a short time early in 536, Constantinople had a pro-Monophysite patriarch and communion had been restored with Alexandria on this basis.

Theodora's effort, however, to turn the empire Monophysite failed. The empire was committed to a western-oriented policy which had been emphasized by the conquest of Vandal Africa and the occupation of Sicily and Dalmatia. This time Justinian determined to establish Chalcedon once more in Egypt. As usual his policy was well considered and his timing was impeccable. The choice also of Paul, the *Hegemon* (abbot) of the Pachomian monastery of Canopus, who happened to be in the capital in connection with a law suit, was a shrewd one, for Canopus had been the centre of Egyptian opposition to Dioscorus. After an interval of more than fifty years the Chalcedonian cause was to be rekindled from there. In the autumn of 537 Paul was consecrated with as much show as possible. The ceremony, however, was performed not in Alexandria, but in Constantinople by the Patriarch Menas (who had displaced Anthimus), with the Roman legate, Pelagius, and representatives of the churches of Antioch and Jerusalem present. The Patriarch Theodosius, meantime, had been summoned to the capital and interned. Paul was given military authority to enforce Chalcedon on the Egyptians. The effect of these actions was to split Christianity in Egypt into two camps, each ultimately organized under its own hierarchy, but from the start the Chalcedonians looked to Constantinople. Though they gradually extended their hold among the official classes and Greeks, and were strong throughout Cyrenaica and in large centres such as Arsinoe and Rhinoclura on the Palestinian frontier, they never gained a real foothold in the Nile Valley. The vast majority of the monasteries remained loyal to the Monophysite tradition. The difference between the two communities was accentuated by the fact that, after Paul, the Chalcedonian patriarchs were invariably foreigners, which emphasized, as nothing had previously, the official character of the Chalcedonian Church. By the beginning of the seventh century, the Coptic or Monophysite patriarch was being contrasted with the Greek or Chalcedonian patriarch. A Coptic-Monophysite national Church had become a fact.

THE COPTIC CHURCH IN EGYPT AND N.-E. AFRICA

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE COPTIC CHURCH IN EGYPT AND NORTH-EAST AFRICA

Justinian's imposition of a Chalcedonian patriarch in Alexandria was followed closely, perhaps in AD 539, by far-reaching administrative reforms. The position of *praefectus Augustalis* as chief civil official in the whole diocese of Egypt was abolished. In his place were five provincial heads of government, independent of each other, but combining military and civil responsibilities. All these had the title of *Dux*, and two of them, namely the governors of Alexandria and the Thebaid, carried that of *Augustalis* in addition. The concentration of power in the hands of a very few individuals had some effect on the history of Christianity in the Nile Valley. In 542 Theodora had only to secure the aid of the *Dux Thebaidis* to ensure the success of her Monophysite-oriented mission to the Nubians, and in 631 Heraclius placed Egypt under the supreme command of the Patriarch Cyrus by combining the office of patriarch with that of *Augustalis*.

In 540 Paul was implicated in a charge of murder and deposed, his place being taken as Chalcedonian patriarch by a Palestinian monk named Zoilus, who was the choice of the powerful Patriarch of Antioch, Ephraim. The Monophysite cause, however, was about to win a major success which contributed to its permanent survival in Africa. South of the Egyptian frontier the three Nubian kingdoms, successors to the Meroitic empire, Nobatia, Makuria and 'Alwa extended down the Nile Valley beyond Khartoum and perhaps as far as Ethiopia. Though Christianity had made some headway among the poor of the capital of the Nobatian kingdom, Faras (Pachoras), in the fifth century, and in scattered areas elsewhere (see chapter 9), the majority of the Nubians were pagan. Since 451 they had been permitted by treaty to celebrate the annual feast of Isis on the island of Philae on their frontier with the empire. In 539 Justinian abrogated this agreement and sent his general, Narses, to close the temple. The Nubians may not have been resisted strongly, for not long after (the exact date is obscure) we find the Nubian King Silko supported by Narses in a victorious campaign against the Blemmyes on the east bank of the Nile. Silko ascribed his victory to 'god' while obliging the Blemmyes to swear by their 'idols' to keep the peace.¹ It looks as though Silko had strong leanings towards Christianity, and when in 542 a Christian mission under the presbyter

¹ For Silko, *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* [CIG], III, 5072. See J. B. Bury, *History of the later Roman Empire*, II (London, 1923), 330.

Julian arrived at Faras the ground had been prepared. This was a Monophysite mission sponsored by the Empress Theodora, who cleverly anticipated a rival party sent by her husband. So thoroughly did Julian preach Monophysitism that when Justinian's mission eventually arrived, its leader was told that, while the emperor's gifts and alliance were welcome, his 'wicked religion' was not.¹ Thus Monophysitism became the religion of Nobatia. In 580 the southern kingdom of 'Alwa was converted by Bishop Longinus, who had been consecrated by the exiled Monophysite patriarch, Theodosius. Sometime before 700, when it was united with Nobatia, Makuria, which had become Chalcedonian between 566 and 570, also turned to Monophysitism. Theodora's initiative had ensured that her faith became the faith of the Nile Valley from Alexandria to Aksum, and it remained so for the next 800 years.

The death of Justinian in 565, however, found two churches firmly ensconced in Egypt. The Chalcedonians were ably led by the Patriarch Apollinaris (551-70), who managed to knit together much of the support that had once been given to Proterius. Outwardly Alexandria looked like a Chalcedonian city. The great churches in the Greek parts of the city were in Chalcedonian hands, while the Coptic-Monophysite centres were in or near the traditional Egyptian suburb of Rakotis. The Chalcedonians included the rich men of the province both in Egypt and Cyrenaica, some Pachomian monks, and scattered communities in the Delta, some of whom remained faithful to Chalcedon until long after the Arab conquest. It was a cohesive and wealthy Greek-speaking Church destined to share the fortunes of the Byzantines in Egypt. At this stage, its Monophysite rival was at a low ebb. Its leadership was reduced to a dispirited group of four or five bishops, of whom the long-lived Theodore of Philae, bishop from 524-77, was the only man of stature. They were divided among themselves between Severans or Theodosians, Julianists, and the descendants of dissenters of earlier periods, and for a decade they were to bicker over the election of a new patriarch. With the possible exception of Pisentios, Bishop of Coptos, c. 600, they produced no intellectual figures or theologians. Their strength lay almost exclusively in the silent support of the monasteries and the mass of Coptic peasants.

Egypt had become a land of monasteries. Apart from great monastic estates, there were smaller private foundations and the cells of hermits. Altogether, these were very numerous. In the Wadi Habib they are

¹ John of Ephesus, *Hist. Eccl.*, iv.6-7 (ed. by E. W. Brooks, *Corp. Script. Christ. Orient.*, *Scriptores Syri*, Louvain, 1935-6).

described as 'growing up like the plants of the field'. Near Alexandria there were said to be 'six hundred flourishing monasteries all inhabited by the orthodox' (i.e. Monophysites), administered by the Coptic patriarch.¹ These houses owned their own lands, which were farmed by peasants who also accepted Monophysitism and who were paid in kind for their services. As we have noted, they were regularly enriched by frequent gifts. Monks and clergy alike were men of the people, the clergy ordained mainly to perform the liturgy, and in many ordinary ways acting as local leaders.

The Egyptians suffered to a full extent the disasters that followed the overthrow of the Emperor Maurice in AD 602. Within a few years Alexandria and the Delta were the scene of violent civil war between the partisans of Maurice's supplanter, Phocas, and his rival, Heraclius. For a few years popular hopes were fixed on John the Almsgiver, the remarkable Chalcedonian Patriarch whom Heraclius appointed in 611. John was the son of a former governor of Cyprus, and had been a layman before his sudden translation to a position of ecclesiastical power in Alexandria. He worked with zeal for the Chalcedonian cause, but in his eight years of rule he established a well-deserved reputation for shrewd but open-handed charity. Homes for the poor, hospitals and charitable institutions were established through Church funds, and a vast sum of 100,000 solidi and craftsmen were sent to Jerusalem in 617 to rebuild the city devastated by the Persians and Jews. It was little wonder that John came to be accepted as a saint by Chalcedonian and Monophysite alike.

Two years later, in 619, the Persians invaded Egypt in force. Byzantine resistance collapsed surprisingly; and the invaders captured Alexandria in 620 and occupied the whole country from Cyrenaica to the Nubian frontier. The reaction of the Copts is instructive. The Persians were treated as enemies and received no support. Far down the Nile Valley at Coptos, Bishop Pisentios fled at their approach. 'Because of our sins', he lamented, 'God has delivered us to the nations without mercy.' Even so, there was no popular rising against the conqueror, only a fatalistic acceptance of events. The way was being prepared for the popular attitude towards the Arabs twenty years later.

Heraclius's victory over the Persians, culminating in the recapture of Jerusalem and the restoration of the True Cross in 630, was followed by the final and, as it proved, disastrous attempt to restore unity between the Monophysites and Chalcedonians. The 'Monergist' compromise

¹ *History of the patriarchs*, I, ch. 14 (ed. by B. T. Evetts, PO, I, 473).

worked out by Heraclius with his advisers, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Sergius, and Cyrus, Metropolitan of Lazica, a Black Sea principality, had much to be said for it. The attribution of one impulse of action (*energeia*) in the incarnate Christ represented a real effort to think beyond the terms of Chalcedonian orthodoxy. Indeed, the Alexandrians themselves were quick to grasp that 'one energy' must be equated to 'one nature', and hence Chalcedon had been renounced in all but name.

Unfortunately, the name proved to be the sticking-point. The man selected by Heraclius to try to persuade the Egyptians to accept the compromise did not possess a personality suitable for his task. This was Cyrus, appointed in 631 to the dual offices of patriarch and civil governor, a reminder, if one were needed, that Byzantine rule involved the integration of Church and state. Cyrus was a man of great energy and courage, but he was harsh and merciless to his opponents. Moreover he was a foreigner, a 'Caucasian', in the eyes of the Copts the supplanter of their own patriarch, Benjamin. They were right not to trust him, for Cyrus's correspondence shows that he was ready also to proclaim the orthodoxy of the *Tome* of Leo. After some initial success, he failed to convince the great majority of the monks that acceptance of Monenergism was possible without the emperor denouncing Chalcedon.

When persuasion failed, Cyrus turned to force. In the six years 635-41, whatever loyalty had survived towards Heraclius in Egypt ebbed away. A 'sullen gloom', as A. J. Butler described it, settled on the land.¹ When eventually the Arabs attacked, in December 639, there was utter confusion. Some Egyptians fought for their lives and possessions against the invaders; others stood aside or harassed the Byzantine forces. In the cities, the circus factions flew at each other's throats. There was strife between Monophysite and Chalcedonian. Only Cyrus's capitulation at Alexandria in September 641 ended the chaos. The Arabs were accepted and some highly placed Egyptians even aided the Arab invasion of Cyrenaica in the following year.

By this time Egypt was in many ways ceasing to belong to the Byzantine world. Coptic art, strongly independent in its choice and treatment of motifs, whether pagan or Christian, had developed alongside the surviving Graeco-Egyptian tradition. Egyptian place names were reverting from Greek to Coptic. In Alexandria itself Coptic was increasingly heard. Egypt was becoming more and more part of an Oriental and African world. The success of the Arabs set the seal on the new direction of her history.

¹ A. J. Butler, *The Arab conquest of Egypt* (Oxford, 1902), 191.

THE EARLY CHURCH IN NORTH-WEST AFRICA

The Muslim conquest had found the Church in the patriarchate in Alexandria a strong body, steeled by misfortune and united under the Coptic Patriarch Benjamin. For a generation all went well. No tears were shed for the Byzantines by seventh-century writers in Egypt. Their defeat had been a just reward for their sins. Thus John, Bishop of Nikiou in the Delta, wrote, *c.* 680, 'the expulsion [of the Romans] and the victory of the Muslims was due to the wickedness of the Emperor Heraclius and the persecution of the orthodox through the Patriarch Cyrus. This was the cause of the ruin of the Roman and the subjugation of Egypt by the Moslem.'¹ By every token, the Coptic Church should have continued to flourish and, as in Norman England, the military caste of the invaders should have been slowly absorbed into the native population to form a new Egyptian nation. That nothing of the sort happened, but that through the eighth and succeeding centuries AD the Coptic Church gradually lost its grip on the population until it was reduced to a small minority in a Muslim population, is a phenomenon which has not yet been adequately explained. (However, see also chapter 8, pp. 345-9.) In the event, only Ethiopia was to preserve the Christian heritage in Africa until modern times.

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE CHURCH IN NORTH-WEST AFRICA

The Church in Roman Africa breaks suddenly on to the stage of history with the trial of twelve Christians before the Proconsul of Africa, Vigellius Saturninus, at Carthage in July AD 180. Before this, practically nothing is known about Christianity there. Unlike Alexandria, Carthage claimed no Apostolic origin. Contact with Christianity in Rome is attested by Tertullian,² but similarities of organization, particularly the strongly monarchical episcopate and liturgical practices, point also to influences from Syria. This may perhaps be explained partly by the position of the Jews in North Africa. These have left their traces in synagogues and cemeteries in many North African towns from Carthage to as far west as Volubilis in Morocco, and they seem to have maintained links with their co-religionists in the eastern Mediterranean and beyond. Carthaginian rabbis are cited in the Babylonian Talmud, and alone among the western Jewish communities the Jews at Carthage and Volubilis used Hebrew as well as Greek and Latin on their funerary inscriptions. In the early part of the third century AD Christians in

¹ John of Nikiou, *Chronicle*, ch. 123.4.

² *De Praescriptione*, 36.

Carthage were known by the Jews as 'Nazarenes' and not as 'Christians', suggesting that they were regarded as schismatics rather than as adherents of a different religion, and they may have derived some background influences from North African Jewry, e.g. from the Hebrew Bible. As elsewhere in the Mediterranean world, individuals under Jewish influence contributed probably to the Church's early converts, and the Jews of Carthage were among its earliest and fiercest persecutors.¹ Down to the last two decades of the second century, however, Christian influence in North Africa was minimal. The age, as we know from Apuleius, was not irreligious, but the thorough excavation of North African town-sites by French archaeologists since the beginning of the present century has revealed no single identifiable Christian monument datable earlier than the middle of the third century. In this, the contrast with the situation on the eastern frontier of the Roman empire at Dura Europos, where the fine Christian house-church was established by AD 232, is striking. The Christians who were brought before Vigellius Saturninus on 17 July 180 must have seemed a rare if irritating phenomenon.

By good fortune what appears to be a transcript of the brief proceedings against Speratus and his friends has survived.² It illustrates the chasm that separated the pagan North Africa, which was approaching the climax of its achievement, from the Christianity that was to supplant it.

Speratus said: 'We have done no wrong, we have never turned our hands to wickedness; we have cursed no one, but return thanks when abused; and therefore we are loyal to our emperor.'

Saturninus the proconsul said: 'We too are religious, and our religion is simple, and we swear by the genius of our lord the emperor, and we make offerings for his safety which you ought to do to.'

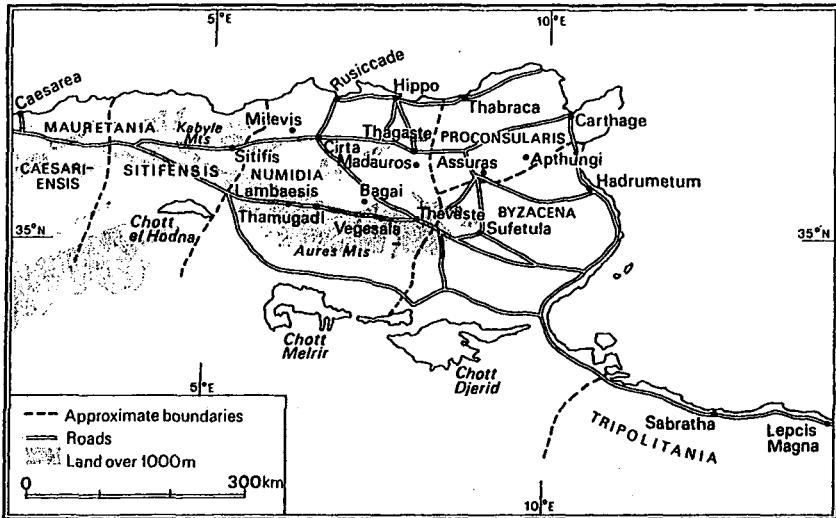
...
Speratus said: 'I do not recognise the empire of this world; I serve instead the God "whom no man has seen or can see with mortal eyes" [I Tim. 6:16]; I have not committed theft; but if I buy anything I pay the tax on it; for I recognise my lord, the king of kings and emperor of mankind.'

After further argument, the martyrs refused an offer of a thirty-day respite for reflection. They declared themselves Christians and on condemnation to death cried '*Deo Gratias*. Today as martyrs we shall be in heaven.' These few lines tell us much about the spirit of North African

¹ Tertullian, *Apol.* 7.3. 'Tot hostes eius quot extranei et quidem proprie ex aemulatione Iudaei, ex concussione milites, ex natura ipsi etiam domestici nostri.'

² Ed. by R. Harris, *Cambridge texts and studies* (Cambridge, 1891) 1, ii, 106.

THE EARLY CHURCH IN NORTH-WEST AFRICA



61 North Africa: fourth-century AD provinces and area.

Christianity. The accused reject utterly the proconsul's invitation to swear by the emperor's genius. They refuse any recognition of 'the empire of this world'. They hope instead for immediate reward in heaven as martyrs, and their ideals are inspired by their understanding of the Bible. The 'books and letters of Paul, a just man', they carried with them. There was an African Bible in existence available to wide sectors of the provincial community. The conflict with the Roman government and religious tradition left little room for compromise.

The persecution, however, was not renewed. In the next decade two proconsuls are stated to have protected the Christians, but their situation was precarious, usually depending on the attitude of individual governors or city magistrates. Christians, however, increased considerably in numbers in Carthage and in some other towns in Proconsular Africa (modern Tunisia). In his earliest works, dated to AD 197, the Christian writer Tertullian (c. 160–c. 240) taunts his pagan adversaries with the ever-growing multitudes of Christians. 'Day by day', he says, 'you groan over the increasing numbers of Christians. Your constant cry is, that the state is beset by us, that the Christians are in your fields, your camps, your blocks of tenements [*insular*]. You grieve over it as a calamity, that every age, in short, every rank is passing over from you to us.'¹ Fifteen years later, he repeated this claim in a tract addressed to the Proconsul Scapula. Christians 'were made, not born', and

¹ *Ad Nationes*, I.14.

Tertullian, probably a lawyer reared in the Latin literary school of the Second Sophistic, was himself a convert.

Why had this dramatic advance of Christianity taken place? The traditional territorial gods of North Africa had not failed and no disaster threatened. North Africa under Septimius Severus (AD 193–211) and his immediate successors was outstandingly prosperous. Tertullian's statement, written in AD 213 in his tract *On the soul*, that cities now existed where there had not been so much as huts previously, and that everywhere there were houses, people, cities and life, is confirmed by the surge of monumental building that transformed the African cities from Lepcis Magna to Volubilis in the first decades of the third century (pls. 22–3). Yet there was another side. Some of the spirit seems to have been going out of classical civilization. These same architectural triumphs are decorated in a heavy, lifeless and derivative style. People were becoming increasingly sceptical about the 'happy times' that the emperors claimed to bring. Christians such as Hippolytus and Tertullian said the age was not of gold but of iron, the last and worst of the demonic imperial ages.¹ Pagans also, such as the retired civil servant, Dio Cassius, deplored the luxury and cruelty of the times. The constancy of Christians 'ever ready for death'² contrasted with the evident futility of public displays associated with the pagan cults. 'We have seen Jove's brother too, hauling out the corpses of the gladiators, hammer in hand', wrote Tertullian,³ and he and many others turned away in disgust to Christianity. In addition, deeply felt provincial and cultural distinctions were becoming blurred and flattened under the impact of uniform romanization. This process had extended to religion. During the second century, Baal and his consort Tanit, the North African deities, were being tamed, deprived of their once traditional human sacrifice, given the Roman names of Saturn and Caelestis, decked out in Roman dress, set in Roman-style temples, and associated with other Roman gods. Christianity, with its reputation for conspiratorial activity and opposition to pagan Roman society, gained converts. In North Africa it was the religion of protest.

By the first decade of the third century AD it was foreshadowing many of its later characteristics. It was puritanical in outlook and sectarian in attitude. Christians kept to themselves, united 'by a common apprehension of religion and bond of hope'.⁴ They took pride in being a

¹ Hippolytus, *In Danielelem*, II.12 (ed. by N. Bonwetsch, 68) and Tertullian, *De Cultu Feminarum*, II.13.6 (*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* [CSEL], 70, 95).

² Tertullian, *Apol.* 50 and *De Spectaculis*, 1.

³ *Apol.* 15, 3–6.

⁴ *Ibid.* 39.1.

close-knit 'sect' or 'school', living in vivid expectation of the Last Day 'when this old world and all its generations would be consumed in one fire', and all their enemies with it, especially the Jews and the pagan magistrates.¹ Above all, their personal hope lay in the crown of martyrdom.

An example of this is provided by an account of the martyrdom in Carthage of Perpetua and Felicitas, victims perhaps of a rescript by Septimius Severus in AD 202 forbidding conversion to Judaism or Christianity.² A version of Perpetua's diary edited by local Christians not long afterwards has survived.³ Vibia Perpetua came from a wealthy family, and was still an unbaptized catechumen when she was arrested together with her friend, the slave-girl Felicitas. They were tried before the procurator and done to death in the amphitheatre at Carthage on 7 March 203. Their ideals were set down in accounts of their dreams and visions while they were in prison, and may reflect the teaching of the Church in Carthage at this time. This teaching was evidently strongly apocalyptic. The Book of Daniel, the *Similitudes* of Enoch, the Book of Revelation, the works of the Roman prophet Hermas, and perhaps the lurid Apocalypse of Peter all seem to have played a part in the confessors' instruction. Baptism merely opened the way for 'the suffering of the flesh'. Contempt for the pagan world, defiance of the Roman authorities, and exaltation at the prospect of martyrdom reveal themselves as the predominant features of North African Christianity.

These ideas found permanent expression in the work of one of the most skilful and intransigent of Christian propagandists of all time, Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus. Tertullian typifies the sense of angry frustration and revolt against the ideals of the *pax Romana* that underlay much of the movement towards Christianity. Without political disloyalty, he saw the world around him as God's enemy and his own. 'What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?', he demanded as he turned his back on his literary education, which had provided him with an encyclopaedic knowledge of Roman history and religion. 'Idolatry' included a vast range of harmless-seeming occupations from which he would ban his fellow Christians. He was a man who saw everything in black and white, to whom compromise was merely diabolical weakness.

¹ Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*, 30.

² I have argued for the reality of the Severan persecution in Frend, 'Open questions concerning the Christians and the Roman Empire in the age of the Severi', *Journal of Theological Studies* N.S., 1974, 25, 2, 333-52.

³ Text in H. Musurillo, *The acts of the Christian martyrs* (Oxford, 1972), 106-31. See W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1971), 116-18, and T. D. Barnes, *Tertullian, a historical and literary study* (Oxford, 1971), 71-80.

His earliest targets were the glorification of the role of the Christian confessor and the inconsistencies in the treatment of the Christians by the Roman authorities. In AD 197, in an imaginary lawyer's plea before the magistrates of Carthage (the *Apologeticum*), he ridiculed the official policy towards the Christians that had been in force since Trajan's time. By this, Christianity was regarded as illegal and adherence was punishable by death, but Christians who recanted and acknowledged the Roman gods were to be freed without further ado. Tertullian poured scorn on a system which encouraged the guilty to win freedom simply by denying his guilt. He also ridiculed current popular suspicions of Christianity with a comment which has passed into history:

If the Tiber reaches the walls, if the Nile does not rise to the fields, if the sky does not move or the earth does, if there is famine, if there is plague, the cry is at once 'The Christians to the lion.' What, all Christians to one lion!¹

Tertullian was a prolific writer, attacking heretics – such as the followers of Marcion – and slackers within the Christian fold. He was a moral zealot, anxious to impose in the name of Christian integrity a code of behaviour and taboo little different from that of the Pharisees. It is not surprising that he quarrelled with more moderate Christians and with the presbyterate of Rome, who apparently maintained close contact with their counterparts in Carthage. He joined the rigorous sect of the Montanists, latter-day saints, originally from Phrygia in Asia Minor but whose teaching, based on the validity of their prophecies and imminence of the Last Day, had spread to Africa, Gaul and Rome. Tertullian's later works subscribed fully to their views. Under his influence, we find the Church in Carthage involved in a dispute with the Roman Church over the nature of the Christian community. With Christians increasing in numbers on both sides of the Mediterranean, was it possible to maintain attitudes acceptable to a small, self-contained sect? The Bishop of Rome, Callistus (AD 217–22), thought not. The issue centred on the Church's power to pardon those who offended against one of the three traditional categories of deadly sin in Judaism and Christianity, namely adultery, apostacy and bloodshed. Callistus, whose career before he became bishop had been varied and not always creditable, decided that the tares within the Christian body must grow up with the wheat, and in particular he was prepared to extend the peace of the Church to adulterers, even among his own clergy. Tertullian took up the challenge. His work *On chastity* (*De Pudicitia*) written c. AD 220,

¹ *Apol.* 40.

gives classic expression to the theology of the gathered Church ranged against institutional religion. The Church, he claimed, was the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit, and it was therefore intolerable that it should contain notoriously sinful members. 'One does not communicate with the works of darkness', he asserted, in words which were to echo down the history of North African Christianity.¹ The Church was the representative of the martyrs and community of men of the Spirit. Peter and Paul had been examples of the discipline of the Spirit in Rome, and Peter's keys were reserved for those who followed in their way. Only if Callistus could demonstrate his apostolic gifts could he claim apostolic powers.

Tertullian had set his seal on the Church in North Africa. Puritanism, the cult of martyrs, expectation of the end of the world, the judgement on those outside the Church, and an ambivalent attitude towards the Roman see were always to be represented in one form or another among its members. But the opposition was strong also. There were the mystically inclined who accepted Christianity as a means of plumbing the secrets of the universe, an élite who found refuge in the esoteric beliefs and dualist ethic of Gnosticism and later in Manichaeism, and there were the many who became Christians without intending any radical break from the predominant pagan society. Why not go to watch the shows in the arena; after all God himself looked down upon them?

The mid third century AD was not a period to reconcile the views of these opposing camps. The murder of the Emperor Alexander Severus by his troops at Mainz on the Rhine frontier in March AD 235 ushered in a period of instability and confusion which profoundly affected the urban civilization of the Mediterranean. Civil wars were added to the continuous wars fought on the imperial frontiers against the Persians and the barbarians. Taxes were increased and the value of the traditional coinage fell rapidly. The urban populations were ruined. The towns of the empire never recovered their previous role. North Africa was itself the scene of a brief but destructive civil war between the army and a considerable proportion of the romanized landowners and town-dwellers in Proconsular Africa. In AD 238 the latter had supported the revolt of the Gordians, who were African senatorial landowners, in a bid to overthrow the Emperor Maximinus. The Third Legion, the only Roman legion in North Africa, stood by Maximinus and initially the revolt failed. Before Maximinus was removed by events in Italy, bloody reprisals had been taken against his opponents. Between AD 244

¹ *De Pudicitia*, 21.

and 284 there is evidence for a dramatic decline in public buildings and donations by the one-time wealthy. Only some half-dozen inscriptions have been found recording public building or dedications. The costly superstructure of urban life – the paved streets, baths, market-places, temples, libraries, aqueducts and public latrines – lacked funds for its upkeep. Signs of decay began to show themselves, there was disease and a growing lack of confidence in the future. Many thought that the end of the world was coming.¹ It was a climate of opinion in which the uncompromising demands of African Christianity found a receptive audience.

The North African countryside was not affected so seriously. A century of peace and freedom from tribal war, coupled with the intelligent encouragement by the authorities of intensive olive culture, had led to a large increase in population. In AD 240 the historian Herodian remarked on the proverbial fertility of the Libyans. Though he was speaking about the revolt of the Gordians, which was centred in Proconsular Africa, a series of inscriptions found in western Numidia and Mauretania Sitifensis show that throughout the whole of the first half of the third century the native fortified settlements (*castella*) were spilling out over their former boundaries, and some were wealthy enough to acquire the status of towns.² For them the main threat lay in razzias from the unassimilated African tribes inhabiting the Kabyle mountains, and between AD 253 and 262 these developed into full-scale warfare. The ten-year revolt of the Bavari of the Kabyles indicated that the empire was threatened from within as well as by the Saharan tribes from without. In addition, taxes on produce, notably the *annona* and forced labour obligations, became heavier. The great increase of milestones dating to the period between the Gordians and Constantine (AD 238–337) indicates strict demarcation of responsibility as between different villages for the upkeep of a highway and its services rather than sudden governmental concern for wayfarers.³

In the generation after Tertullian's final works, Christianity had gained further ground. Its organization was by now strongly episcopal, and in c. AD 245 no less than ninety bishops had met in the military

¹ As the Carthaginian magistrate, Demetrianus, against whom Cyprian wrote the *Ad Demetrianum* in AD 251 (ed. by W. Hartel, CSEL, III, 1, Vienna, 1868).

² J. Carcopino, 'Les castella de la plaine de Sétif', *Revue Africaine*, 1918, 62, 1ff.

³ For an example of the establishment of a military highway between AD 217–38 in the far west of the North African provinces, see P. Salama, 'La voie romaine de la vallée de la Tafna', *Bulletin d'Archéologie Algérienne*, 1966–7, 2, 183–217. For the use of milestones in Asia Minor as points of demarcation for forced labour, see Frend, 'A third-century inscription relating to angareia in Phrygia', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1956, 46, 46–56.

capital, Lambaesis in southern Numidia, to try and depose a colleague for heresy and misconduct. The first identifiable Christian cemeteries (*areae*) at Hadrumetum (Sousse) and Sbikhra (in southern Tunisia) may date to this period.¹ The Church was making an impact on provincial society, and in AD 248 the clergy and Christian people of Carthage elected a wealthy convert, Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus, as their bishop. He was to govern the Church in Africa for ten years, and the collection of his surviving correspondence, amounting to eighty-one letters and some fifteen treatises, throws a wealth of light on the Church in North Africa at a critical moment of its history.

The strains within the empire were soon to confront the Church with a supreme test of survival. Faced with a serious invasion of Goths across the Danube frontier, the army had acclaimed its general Decius as emperor in AD 249. Decius believed that part of the rot had been caused by the pro-Christian attitude of his predecessors, and that the salvation of the state could be guaranteed only by unequivocal service to the traditional gods of Rome and a return to the virtues of the past. In January AD 250, Fabian, Bishop of Rome, was executed, and soon Cyprian himself was in hiding. Sometime in June or early July 250, commissions composed of the senior citizens of each town supervised the sacrifices to the gods which the emperor had ordered to take place. The temples were besieged by willing crowds, Christians mingling with their pagan neighbours. The Church had been caught at a disadvantage. It was swollen with nominal adherents. Some of its bishops were combining ecclesiastical office with duties as bailiffs to landowners. For them the zeal of the previous generation seemed remote. The Church also was at this time almost entirely an urban organization, whose leaders would be well known though not necessarily well liked. They were unprepared for the crisis. All who sacrificed, Christian and pagan alike, received a certificate (*libellus*). There was little resistance. For a short time it seemed that the Church in North Africa had collapsed.

The few who had stood out restored the Church's fortunes. These confessors were mainly humble folk in the towns – 'little instructed in holy Scripture', as one was described – but they knew their rights. Their confession had made them 'friends of the Lord' and they could sit in judgement with Him. Meantime they would spend the merit they had acquired as they wished. Thousands who had lapsed were repenting of their folly and were clamouring to be allowed to return to the Church.

¹ Christian cemeteries are mentioned by Tertullian, *Ad Scapulam*, 3. The coin series connected with the Christian cemetery at Sbikhra extends back to Gordian III (AD 238-44).

The confessors were soon giving out recommendations for indulgence wholesale. Cyprian himself was told by them to preserve his 'peace with the holy martyrs'.¹ The evident abuse of these proceedings gave Cyprian his chance to restore his authority. By Easter AD 251 he was back in Carthage, and soon afterwards he summoned a council at which a scale of penances was decided for various degrees of lapse. Responsibility was laid on the bishops for their readmission of the fallen.

This was a major triumph for Cyprian. Henceforth the power of the bishop in the North African Church was never challenged. Moreover, within a very short time, the Church in North Africa had regained its former strength. In a situation of growing insecurity, its close-knit organization and the evident wealth that even permitted the payment of monthly stipends to its clergy, began to make a serious impression on the minds of the provincials. Decius had fallen in battle against the Goths in June AD 251. His successor, Gallus (AD 251-2), tried to reactivate the persecution. The Jews of Carthage made common cause with the pagans against the Church. For a moment Cyprian's life was in danger, but the storm passed. In the next year the provinces were struck by plagues followed by the revolt of the Kabyle tribes. In face of the one, the Christian ministers stood firm and died at their posts; in face of the other, a large sum was collected for the ransom of prisoners. In retrospect these years may well have marked the turn of the tide in favour of Christianity in North Africa. The Church alone had proved itself able to confront the perils of the time and survive. Meantime Cyprian had been able to place his own stamp of orthodoxy on the Church in North Africa. This was based on a series of rigid deductions from monotheism. If there was one God, there was also one Church, one bishop in each community. The Church consisted of bishop and people united in each other. There could be no other altar, no other priesthood, no other Church than this. The worst crime was disobedience to the priesthood, and the worst situation for a man to be in was that of schism. There was no salvation outside the Church, in whom the bishop was intermediary between God and His people and the chosen vehicle of the Holy Spirit. These essentially Old Testament, indeed Judaistic, ideas were associated with a rigorous view of the purity of the Church itself, 'the lily among thorns' and pure bride of Christ. Thanks to Tertullian and Cyprian, the Church in Africa had already developed an unshakable theology that embraced Mono-

¹ Cyprian, *Letter*, 23.

theism, the Church and the duties of the individual in a single rigid system.

Cyprian's disputes with the Roman see over the right to readmit to clerical status bishops who had lapsed during the persecution, and on the validity of sacraments, especially Baptism, given outside the Church (e.g. by schismatics and heretics), belong more to the general history of the Church than to the history of Africa. In both these issues, however, Cyprian adopted an uncompromising attitude. Sacraments given by a cleric outside the Church were positively harmful to their recipients. It was necessary for a congregation to separate from a cleric who was in a state of sin and in whom the Holy Spirit no longer operated. Those baptized by heretics and converted to the Catholic Church must be baptized anew. There was no salvation outside the Church, and the Church was the pure 'bride of Christ', whose integrity must be preserved above all else.

These ideas, passionately held by Cyprian, commanded general support in North Africa and were upheld in Church councils summoned during AD 255 and 256. However, schism with Rome seemed likely when in the summer of 257 the Christians were again faced by persecution. In the new crisis, the disputes were allowed to fall into abeyance. Issues had been raised, however, of great importance for the future of the North African Church. In terms of the lives of clergy, the persecution under Valerian between AD 257 and 260 was far more costly than the Great Persecution forty years later. This time Cyprian acted with courage and statesmanship. His letters to fellow bishops in Numidia who had been condemned to the mines reflect an assurance of the ultimate victory of Christianity. He himself was first sentenced to exile and, after nearly a year in his villa at Curubis on the Gulf of Hammamet, was summoned before the proconsul to answer for his beliefs. The examination was short and to the point. Cyprian refused to sacrifice to the gods, and was condemned to death as a man of 'irreligious life' who had drawn together a number of men 'bound by an unlawful association'. On 14 September 258 the sentence of beheading was carried out in Carthage.¹

To contemporaries, the martyrdom of Cyprian gave divine sanction to his opinions. By his uncompromising assertion of the superiority of the bishop's office and the purity of the Church through its sacraments administered by a personally blameless clergy, he set the Church in

¹ The text of the trial is in *Acta Proconsularia* (ed. by W. Hartel, III.3, pp. cx-cxiv). English trans. in J. Stevenson (ed.), *A new Eusebius* (London, 1957), 260-2.

North Africa on a course which ran contrary to most of the remainder of the Christian world and not least the Church in Rome. The next generation was to show how far the traditional rigorism of the Church of the Martyrs could survive in conditions in which Christianity was rapidly becoming the religion of the empire itself.

There are no collections of letters to illuminate the story of the next forty years. Though it is likely that the poet Commodian wrote his verses at this time, depicting Christianity in apocalyptic terms and looking forward to a reversal of the fortunes of rich and poor, his date is too uncertain to allow of any theory being built upon them. The major development, however, in the period between the death of Cyprian and the outbreak of the Great Persecution was the spread of Christianity into wide areas of the Numidian and Mauretanian countryside to become the predominant religion in these provinces. The list of bishops who attended Cyprian's council in AD 256 already shows the Church represented in parts of southern Numidia. The next list, reflecting the situation of the time of the Great Persecution, gives the names of a number of new sees in the same area, and during the interval the primate of Numidia had become sufficiently powerful to win the right of consecrating the bishop of Carthage.¹ Among the population, too, one can detect the swing towards Christianity. In AD 259, during the persecution under Valerian, fugitive Christians near Cirta were reported and handed over to the authorities. By the time of the Great Persecution, the same area had become Christian to the point of fanaticism. There seems also to have been a decline in the worship of the African national deities, particularly of Saturn, whose last-dated dedication in Numidia and Mauretania is AD 272.² Though in western Tunisia a fine dedication in his honour dated by the consular dates to 323 has been discovered, it does not seem to have remained the religion of the people.³ Even local gods, like Bacax, worshipped in his grotto, in the mountains north of Aquae Thibilitanae (Hammam Meskoutine),

¹ The list of eighty-seven bishops who attended Cyprian's council at Carthage is printed in Hartel's edition of Cyprian's works, III.1, pp. 435ff. New sees in Numidia are known from the names of bishops who attended the consecration of Silvanus as Bishop of Cirta in AD 305. The right of the Numidians to participate in the consecration of the Bishop of Carthage is attested by Optatus of Milevis, *De Schismate Donatistarum*, 1.18 (ed. by C. Ziwsa, CSEL, xxvi), and Augustine, *Psalmus contra partem Donati*, lines 44-6.

² CIL, 8, 20435 (Sillègue in Mauretania Sitifensis). See M. Leglay, *Saturne africaine: histoire* (Paris, 1966), 96. Most of these Numidian and Mauretanian sites which have produced substantial evidence for Saturn-worship were Donatist bishoprics in the fourth century.

³ See A. Beschaouch, 'Une Stèle consacrée à Saturne le 8 Novembre 323', *Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques*, N.S., 1968, 4 (Paris, 1969), 253-68. Leglay also found evidence for the continued popularity of the cult of Saturn in Tunisia at least down to the time of Constantine.

seem to have become neglected towards the end of the third century. The last dedication to Bacax is in AD 283.¹

It is impossible to say just why this vast, silent revolution took place. The failure of the traditional gods to assure prosperity; the obvious brotherly concern of the Christians, coupled with their fortitude in adversity; the social content of the biblical message – these may have played the same part in North Africa as they did in Asia Minor during the fourth century. We cannot be sure. Certainly the move towards Christianity was influencing all classes, including writers such as Arnobius and Lactantius, as well as young idealists in Carthage and villagers on the Numidian high plateau. Great changes were taking place in provincial society. The reforms of Diocletian and his colleagues from AD 285 onwards were designed to restore efficiency to the administration, prosperity to the cities, discipline to the people and worship to the gods. In Africa the first aim resulted in the radical alterations in the provincial boundaries which have been described in chapter 3. The net result of these changes was to increase the number of provinces and the bureaucrats who administered them. These in turn had to be sustained by the provincials. Additional burdens on the latter resulted from the massive restoration of the cities that accompanied these changes. In many towns, such as Djemila (Mauretania Sitifensis), Lambaesis, Macomades and Ad Maiores (all in Numidia), aqueducts and other public buildings ‘long ago collapsed’ were restored, and similar zeal was shown in restoring temples to the gods of the Roman state. A contemporary African, albeit a convert to Christianity, commented bitterly on the cost of these enterprises to the provincial. It may be that the association of the restoration of Roman gods with the costly restoration of the Roman towns and the spawning of a greedy bureaucracy had some influence in turning him against the religion of the empire.

The real wealth of North Africa had now become concentrated in the villages on the high plateau of Numidia and Mauretania Sitifensis. It was there also that a new form of the traditional North African interpretation of Christianity was fast taking root. By the end of the third century AD, these areas, consisting of a high table-land sandwiched between the coastal Atlas to the north and the Aures mountains in the south, had produced a distinctive rural economy. There were towns,

¹ *CIL*, 8, 5504–19 and 18828–57 for the series of inscriptions commemorating the annual sacrifices to Bacax in the grotto of Jebel Thaya by the magistrates of the town of Aquae Thibilitanae (Hammam Meskoutine).

especially in the narrow strip of land immediately north of the Aures, where rainfall was comparatively abundant and the garrisons of the Third Legion attracted the civil population to settle around them. Broadly speaking, however, the Mauretanian and Numidian high plains were peopled by villagers. The work of Stéphane Gsell in mapping the Romano-Berber village sites before they were destroyed by advancing modern urbanization cannot be praised too highly.¹ The detailed work of André Berthier and his colleagues immediately before the Second World War showed a density of one Romano-Berber settlement in the typical Commune Mixte of Ain Mlila to about every 4 km, and some were comparatively large agglomerations.² The inhabitants were Berbers, with probably much the same knowledge of Punic and Latin as their descendants possessed of Arabic and French. They were *coloni* on great imperial and private estates, enjoying, however, the status secured for them under the *Lex Mancian* in the second century. The basis of their livelihood was flourishing harvests of olives and barley. These villagers were now deserting the age-old worship of Saturn for Christ. Their literal acceptance of the biblical word brought a powerful reinforcement to the puritan elements among the older established Christian communities. In AD 295 the case of the young recruit Maximilian from a village near Thebeste (Tebessa), who preferred martyrdom to service in the army despite the presence of Christian officers in its ranks, was a portent.³

In contrast, in many of the towns, particularly in Carthage, the long peace and the development of a standardized administrative hierarchy in the Church centred on the diaconate, had blunted the edge of much of the idealism of Cyprian's time. Confessors were no longer to be volunteers, bones of alleged martyrs were to receive no veneration before recognition by the Church authorities. The archdeacon (*archidiaconus*) was emerging as the most powerful cleric in the diocese, overshadowing the presbyters. Here too was a potential source of friction. Church and state appeared to be working happily together. Young Christians who sighed for braver times found no encouragement in Carthage.

This was the situation when Diocletian at last threw down the gage

¹ S. Gsell, *Atlas archéologique de l'Algérie* (Algiers, 1911).

² A. Berthier et al., *Les Vestiges du Christianisme antique dans la Numidie centrale* (Algiers, 1942), 23-4, and the present writer's description of Romano-Berber rural sites he has observed, in *Donatist Church*, 44-5.

³ Passio Maximiliani; see R. Knopf and G. Krueger, eds., *Ausgewählte Märtyrerakten*, 86-7, and the discussion by P. Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1901-23), III, 114-21.

to the Christians in February AD 303. By early May the first edict had arrived, requiring the surrender of the Scriptures and the destruction of church buildings, and this was reinforced by a demand that the Christian clergy should sacrifice to the gods. But there was to be no bloodshed, and laity, if they did not provoke the authorities, were to be left in peace. Once again, as under Decius and Valerian, the authorities achieved great initial success. At Cirta, Bishop Paulus was summoned before the *curator* (mayor) of the city on 19 May and the following conversation took place:

The Mayor to Paul the Bishop: 'Bring out the writings of the law and anything else you have here, according to the order, so that you may obey the command.'

The Bishop: 'The readers have the Scriptures, but we will give what we have here.'

The Mayor: 'Point out the readers or send for them.'

The Bishop: 'You all know them.'

The Mayor: 'We do not know them.'

The Bishop: 'The municipal office knows them, that is, the clerks Edusius and Junius.'

The Mayor: 'Leaving over the matter of the readers, whom the office will point out, produce what you have.'¹

The bishop complied and allowed church plate and other property including a large amount of men's and women's clothing to be brought out. It was heaped in front of the clergy and was duly inventoried. One of those who took part in the scene was Silvanus, a sub-deacon, who later became the Donatist bishop. He was not allowed to forget this incident.

Similar scenes took place in the Proconsular Province. Action by the authorities was often swift. The first that ordinary people saw of the persecution was burning churches and clergy and church officials being required to hand over Scriptures. It was not until the late autumn that resistance began to gather from congregations indignant at the pusillanimous behaviour of their clergy. In the small town of Abitina in the upper valley of the Medjerda, a group of forty-seven Christians led by the presbyter Saturninus were arrested while holding a service. Their bishop had apostatized, but their enthusiasm had been maintained by the presence among them of young idealists from Carthage. Their subsequent fortunes affected the future of North African Christianity. At their trial before the Proconsul Anulinus in Carthage in February

¹ *Gesta apud Zenophilum* (ed. by C. Ziwsa, CSEL, xxvi), 186-8. (English trans. in Stevenson, *New Eusebius*, 287-9.)

AD 304, they maintained their faith, and were returned to prison. Thereupon they seem to have held a sort of council at which they made a solemn declaration that no one who resorted to the communion of *traditores* would participate with them in the joys of Paradise. Thus after half a century, confessors claimed once again the right of binding and loosing on earth. The challenge apparently was taken up by the leading cleric in the church at Carthage, the archdeacon Caecilian. He was said to have forbidden visitors and supplies from reaching the confessors in prison. Whether they starved or not is not known, but Caecilian was no Cyprian. He became associated with collaboration with the authorities and hostilities to the martyrs.

By the spring of AD 304, Diocletian had been stricken with a serious, lingering illness. Effective government was in the hands of his Caesar, Galerius, and, following the precedent of Decius, he ordered that everyone should now sacrifice to the gods. Doubts have been raised whether this Fourth Edict was ever enforced in North Africa. In particular, the inscription from Castellum Elephantum (Rouffach) which names 'martyrs of Milevis' who suffered in the 'days of the thurification under the *praeses* Florus',¹ is suspect, for Florus had ceased to be governor of a united Numidia by the time Diocletian celebrated his *Vicennalia* on 20 November 303, five months before the Fourth Edict was promulgated. However, it was only the Fourth Edict that forced laymen to sacrifice, and a significant number of African martyrs, including a group of thirty-four commemorated on a mosaic in a church at Ammaedara (Haidra in Tunisia), were laymen.² Certainly, the church historian Eusebius believed that Africa suffered only a little less than Egypt during the Great Persecution, and this would have been impossible to credit in the light of the scanty evidence for martyrdoms in AD 303. The Numidian Church Council held in March 305 to elect a successor to Bishop Paulus shows that it was comparatively easy for bishops to escape the order to sacrifice or surrender the Scriptures. All in all, it would seem wise to accept the evidence of the *Acta Crispinae* to the effect that the year 304 witnessed a massive effort to enforce sacrifices by the Christian laity and that many, particularly in Numidia, resisted

¹ *CIL*, 8, 6700 = 19353. For the view that the Fourth Edict of persecution was not enforced in the west, see G. E. M. de Ste Croix, 'Aspects of the Great Persecution', *Harvard Theological Review*, 1954, 47, 84ff., and, on Florus, see L. Leschi, 'Le Centenarium d'Aqua Viva', *Revue Africaine*, 1943, 87, 5-22.

² Published in *Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques*, 1934, 69, with a comment by H. Delehaye in *Analecta Bollandiana*, 1936, 54, 313-16. For inscriptions commemorating Numidian martyrs of the period AD 303-4, see also Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire*, III, 177-8, and Berthier *et al.*, *Les Vestiges du Christianisme*, 210ff.

THE DONATISTS

and were martyred. Sixty years afterwards popular folklore associated these acts incorrectly with the previous phase of the persecution for which Florus was responsible.

THE DONATISTS

By March AD 305, two months before Diocletian and Maximian abdicated, the persecution had ended in Africa. It did not bring peace to the Church. At Cirta the mob had already taken matters into their own hands. For Bishop Paulus's successor they had chosen the sub-deacon Silvanus, and they shut the citizens among the Christians in the cemetery of the martyrs while the election was carried through. When twelve Numidian bishops assembled on 5 March to consecrate Silvanus, four of their number were guilty of having been *traditores* and one was a murderer as well. None the less Silvanus, despite his record during the persecution, was duly consecrated.

For most of the next seven years North Africa was governed by officials appointed by the usurper Maxentius (AD 306-12). Church property was restored and churches were open again. The administration was just tolerant enough to allow hostility between confessors and *traditores* to fester without interference, and the inherent suspicions between Carthage and Numidia to come to the surface. In 311, however, the Bishop of Carthage died. As misfortune would have it, Caecilian was chosen as his successor, and his consecration was hurried through before the Numidian primate could arrive and exercise his right to participate in the event.

The Numidians were not to be outdone, and Caecilian's record in the Great Persecution had not been forgotten. Finding that Caecilian's title was disputed by the people at large, the Numidian primate, Secundus of Tigisis, appointed an *interventor* (temporary administrator of the see) and only after his murder did he proceed to the election of a new bishop (summer? AD 312). The choice fell on Majorinus, the chaplain to the household of a Spanish *grande dame* named Lucilla, whom Caecilian had offended mortally by forbidding her to kiss the bone of an unauthenticated martyr before she received Communion. The North African Church was rent in schism.

Such was the situation that confronted Constantine on the morrow of his victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge on 28 October AD 312. North Africa was essential to him for the supply of Rome with food through the winter. The provinces had surrendered without a blow.

The all-important question was whose support to win, not least among the powerful community of North African Christians. Constantine unhesitatingly made the wrong choice, upholding Caecilian from the outset, subsidizing him from the imperial treasury, and threatening his enemies. On 15 April 313 the latter appealed to the emperor to appoint Gallic justices to decide the issues between Caecilian and themselves. Gaul had been little affected by the persecution, and the appeal to the emperor may be interpreted as an appeal to the senior magistrate of the empire to appoint judges in a matter of litigation (much as the Antiochene clergy had approached Aurelian in AD 272, to remove Paul of Samosata from his see and his palace). It was not an admission of the emperor's right to intervene in religious questions.

Constantine accepted the plea and asked the Bishop of Rome, Miltiades, himself an African, to try the case. Before the latter could convoke his assessors, Majorinus had disappeared from the scene. The opponents of Caecilian chose a far abler man in his place, Donatus of Casae Nigrae on the Saharan border of Numidia, who quickly won the unchallenged support of both the Carthaginian and Numidian elements in the opposition to Caecilian. He was to be a thorn in the Roman government's flesh for forty years.

Miltiades's hearing took place in the Lateran Palace at Rome between 2 October and 5 October AD 313. The verdict was given in favour of Caecilian, and Donatus was condemned as a disturber of ecclesiastical discipline. This could have been the end of the matter, but in Africa public opinion was running strongly in favour of Donatus. Rumours suggested that Caecilian had been consecrated by a *traditor* in the person of Felix, Bishop of Aphthungi. There were suspicions, too, that Miltiades had not been impartial and had to cover up his own failure in the Persecution. Another appeal was made to Constantine, and the latter reluctantly convoked a Council of bishops from the whole Prefecture of the Gauls (Britain, Gaul and Spain) to meet at Arles on 1 August AD 314. Meantime there was to be an on-the-spot inquiry into the case of Felix of Aphthungi. The Council, as might be expected, went against the Donatists, and also decided that the African custom of rebaptizing reconciled heretics must be abandoned (Canon 9). Another aspect of Cyprian's work was thus being threatened by outsiders. The Donatists refused to submit. Their case was aided by legal delays which prevented Felix from being cleared until February 315, and also by the outbreak of war between Constantine and Licinius (314-15). Both Caecilian and Donatus were kept in Italy at the emperor's pleasure. By the summer of

315, Constantine had decided to rehear the case himself; he even planned to go to Africa to lay down there and then 'how the supreme deity should be worshipped'. Only after Donatus had escaped detention and Caecilian had followed him back to North Africa did Constantine give his final verdict, in favour of Caecilian, on 10 November 316.

By this time however, Donatus's hold on Africa was almost complete. It was not disturbed either by Constantine's effort to coerce his supporters between AD 317-21, nor by a scandal in Numidia in 320 which demonstrated that many of Donatus's best-known supporters were themselves *traditores*. Caecilian was among the few western bishops who attended the Council of Nicaea in 325, and he then disappears from history without trace. Within the next decade or so, as Jerome admits, 'nearly all North Africa' accepted the Church of Donatus.¹

The reasons for Donatus's success lie in the complex of the psychological and social factors which play so large a part in mankind's religious history. Though none of his writings has survived, his opponents testify to him as a formidable and dedicated leader, combining the qualities of orator and administrator. He was regarded by his supporters as a prophet who had direct access to the secrets of the Lord. Men swore by 'his white hairs' as under Islam they were to swear 'by the beard of the prophet'. In Carthage he carried to extreme lengths the Old Testament concepts of the North African sacerdotal episcopate. Like some Jewish High Priest, he celebrated the mysteries alone, allowing no one to participate with him; and he claimed sovereign authority for himself. He was known by contemporaries simply as 'Donatus of Carthage'. Yet, like Cyprian, he could also give way in the cause of the unity of his Church. When, c. AD 336, bishops in Mauretania again challenged the re-baptism rule on behalf of those who had been baptized by clergy who had at that stage been in communion with Caecilian, he summoned a council of 270 bishops and accepted the consensus that this should be remitted. Like Cyprian, he accepted that the supreme voice of the Church rested in the unanimity of its bishops assembled in council. The other factor in his favour was his complete identification with the theology of Cyprian and with the whole rigorist tradition of the African Church. No tares were accepted in the Lord's field, namely the Church. There was to be no interference in its affairs by the state, whether the emperor was Christian or not. His question to the imperial commissioners sent to him in 346 by the Emperor Constans,

¹ Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus* 93: 'paene totam Africam (Donatus) decepit', writing c. AD 392.

'What has the emperor to do with the Church?', has won its place in the folklore of western Christendom.¹

Donatus's energy reflects the further advance of Christianity in all parts of Roman North Africa. The first half of the fourth century AD witnessed the earliest recognizably Christian inscriptions and buildings.² Many of the towns, however, retained a strong pagan influence, especially among the local ruling citizens. There are more inscriptions in honour of the Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-3) than to any of his longer-lived colleagues. The well-known *Album* of Timgad, dating to about 363, lists all the members of the city council (*curia*) together with their offices and the names of the imperial officials stationed in the town. It provides a document of the greatest interest regarding the social structure, administration and religious composition of the upper classes in a relatively ancient (Timgad was founded as a colony of veterans in c. AD 100) and prosperous city in Numidia. Out of 158 offices mentioned, there were 11 *clerici* – almost certainly Christian clergy. Of the remainder, most of the *sacerdotales* and *flamines* (priests) must have been pagans, and those who were not would have to attend sacrifices on public occasions. We know, however, from other evidence that Timgad was one of the most important Donatist strongholds, and outside the city boundaries was growing up a large Christian quarter dominated by a vast cathedral, while away to the south of the town was a Christian cemetery which eventually contained no less than 15,000 graves (pls. 24-5). In North Africa as elsewhere in the empire, Christianity came up from below, through the artisan class, and only later did it penetrate the city aristocracies. Though the cities still had an intellectual life based on the Latin classics, these aristocracies were now very different from the wealthy corporations that a century earlier had established their splendours. Despite the considerable efforts by some individual governors, notably Publilius Ceionius Albinus, governor of Numidia 364-7, to re-equip them with market-places and water supplies, the inscriptions record increasingly their ruined and broken-down appearance. A few big houses of 'patrons', some ornate churches and baptisteries, ill-repaired public buildings and streets and a Christian quarter surrounding a large church outside the original walls, composed of

¹ Optatus, *De Schismate Donatistarum*, III.3.

² The earliest dated church in North Africa is oddly enough from the military settlement of Altava in the far west of Mauretania Caesariensis, a '*basilica*' dating to AD 309 (a clear piece of evidence that Maxentius's policy was not anti-Christian). See J. Marcillet-Jaubert, *Les Inscriptions d'Altava* (Paris, 1968), no. 19. Another early dated church also comes from the same province – Castellum Tingitanum (AD 324); *CIL*, 8, 9708.

rather squalid buildings: such must have been the picture of many North African cities towards the end of the fourth century AD.¹

The villages, especially those in Numidia and Mauretania, presented a different picture (pls. 26–31). The tenant farmers, donkey-drivers and small tradesmen that made up a typical village population with its twice-monthly market day, would be Christians to a man. Small Romano-Berber settlements, such as Mechta Azrou or Oued R'zel on the Algerian high plateau, had a dozen churches between them, all built on the same general plan, simple basilica-type buildings with baked mud and stone walls and beaten earth floors, centred on an alleged martyr's tomb, and sometimes with adjacent storage rooms for grain and olive-oil. In the 340s AD, these villages became the scene of a movement which combined religious with social protest and in some respects foreshadowed similar explosions of agrarian discontent in the European Middle Ages. The Circumcellions emerged as religious fanatics seeking martyrdom and openly threatening the social order, and they continued to be active until the arrival of the Vandals in Africa in 429. A great deal of research has been devoted to them.²

Scholars tend to emphasize either the religious or the economic roles of the Circumcellions. Were they an *ordo* composed of free labourers who circulated the great landed estates in Numidia and Mauretania, offering their services at times of intensive labour demand such as the olive harvest? Were the *cellae* around which they dwelt 'for the sake of their food', granaries or martyrs' chapels? What was their relationship to the Donatist Church? All contemporary authorities were agreed on a number of points. The Circumcellions were peasants (*agrestes*) whose main radius of action was 'upper Numidia and Mauretania'.³ They dominated some of the hill-fort settlements in Augustine's diocese of Hippo, and they were Donatists. They regarded themselves as having a specifically religious calling. Their leaders were known as 'captains of the saints'.⁴ The women who were included among their bands were described even by Augustine as *sanctimoniales*; they perambulated the shrines of martyrs, and the discovery in several rustic churches of silos

¹ A good example is provided by Cuicul (Djemila) where five big courtyard-type town houses dating to the last part of the fourth century AD were discovered. See Y. Allais, *Djemila* (Paris, 1938), 45.

² Particularly by H. J. Diesner, in essays collected under the heading *Kirche und Staat im spätrömischen Reich* (Berlin, 1963); by E. Tengström, *Donatisten und Katholiken* (Göteborg, 1964), 24–78; by S. Calderone, in *La Parola del Passato*, 1967, cxiii, 94–109; and by Friend, *Donatist Church*, 171–4, and in *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 1969, 20, 542–9.

³ Praedestinatus, *De Haeresibus*, 69: 'in partibus Numidiae superioris et Mauretaniae'.

⁴ Optatus, *De Schismate Donatistarum*, III.4: 'Fasir et Axido duces sanctorum'.

and storage jars suggests that their *cellae* were in fact shrines. At the same time, they were revolutionaries. Both Optatus of Milevis and Augustine detail outrages against the rich and the landowners. 'No one could feel secure in their estates. The debtors' bond lost its force. In those days no creditor had the liberty of exacting payment of a debt.'¹ Rich men would find themselves bundled out of their carriages and forced to change places with their slaves. However, even these activities fulfilled a religious purpose. The object was to provoke martyrdom. Magistrates would be accosted and given the alternatives either of ordering the execution of the Circumcellions or of being murdered themselves. At the foot of the cliffs around Nif en-Nisr near Ain Milila on the Numidian high plateau, a series of roughly cut inscriptions on individual rocks and boulders, bearing the name of an individual and the date of his *reditum* ('rendering' his soul to God), provide mute evidence of the extent to which fanaticism would take them. The Circumcellions were not political separatists and they used the Latin of the Donatist Church as their idiom, but they represented in an extreme state the apocalyptic hopes of rural North African Christianity, and its complete rejection of the official christianization of the empire. The struggle against the world, the domain of the Devil, continued. For three quarters of a century the Circumcellion war cry 'Deo Laudes' was more dreaded than the lion's roar.

The Circumcellions were the immediate cause of Donatus's exile in AD 347. In the previous year, perhaps expecting the same favour from Constans as Athanasius had received from Constantius, Donatus had petitioned Constans for recognition as undisputed Bishop of Carthage. The emperor sent out a commission of inquiry under two officials, Paul and Macarius. In Numidia, however, they ran into trouble and had to fight a pitched battle against Circumcellion insurgents near Bagai, where the bishop had turned his church into a fortress. When the commissioners returned to Carthage, the Donatists were proscribed, and Donatus was sent into exile in Gaul, where he died in AD 355. There followed fourteen years of Catholic ascendancy. Before this was suddenly and completely ended at the accession of Julian in 361, the Catholics had been able to establish themselves as an alternative Church. Some towns, notably Thagaste (Souk Ahras), came over to them and did not return to the Donatist allegiance.² In Optatus of Milevis

¹ Ibid., and compare Augustine's description of Circumcellion activities over seventy years later in *Letter*, 185.4.15.

² This fact had a great effect on North African history, for Augustine was born at

(*fl.* 365–85), they produced a notable historian, who was able also to argue their case on doctrinal grounds as well as to provide invaluable evidence for the origins and development of the schism.

Julian's policy of unrestricted toleration for all Christian sects, in the hope that the Church would collapse in factional strife, came near to success in North Africa. The Donatists returned in strength, and in a few months of 362 the Catholics were swept from the scene amid every form of ignominy. In plundered Catholic churches, the Eucharist was thrown to the dogs, and in some towns Catholics were boycotted. Moreover, Donatus had chosen his successor wisely. Parmenian, though a Gaul or Spaniard, soon adapted himself to Africa. In his thirty years' tenure of office, the Donatists came quietly to dominate the ecclesiastical scene. The Church led by Parmenian was in every way a continuation of the African Church of a century before. Its characteristics were the integrity manifested by its priesthood and members, the mystical union of the saints guided by the Holy Spirit, a sense of predestination, and the glorification of martyrdom. As the writer of the *Acts of Saturninus*, a fourth-century Donatist tract, wrote: 'The virtues of the people are multiplied in the presence of the Spirit. The glory of the Spirit is to conquer in the martyrs and triumph in the confessor.'¹ The remainder of western Christendom rejected the Donatists. This made no difference to their position in Africa, and it was unaffected even by their implication in the revolt of the Kabyle chieftain, Firmus, during 373–5. With more than 300 bishops, the almost complete support of the rural populations, and the adherence of many educated laity in the towns, the Church of Donatus seemed impregnable. But the death of Parmenian in 391 and the arrival of Augustine on the African scene were to bring about profound changes.

AUGUSTINE AND THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL

Augustine was the greatest figure in North African Christianity, though his legacy was to be European rather than African. He was born at Thagaste, in November AD 354, during the period of the Catholic revival, a fact which determined the course of his life. His father, Patritius, was a pagan city councillor, but his mother, Monnica, was a strong-minded native Catholic Christian. In the history of Christianity

Thagaste in AD 354 during the Catholic ascendancy. For his comment on the religious situation there, see *Letter*, 93.5.17.

¹ *Acta Saturnini*, 20 (PL, VIII, col. 703).

in North Africa, Augustine's importance lies in the fact that it was very largely through his genius that those elements which were opposed to the predominant rigorist party in the Church, namely the Gnostics and Catholics, and which had hitherto remained in the background, now came into their own. In the twenty years from 410 to 429 that separate the fall of Rome to Alaric and the Vandal invasion of North Africa, the Catholics gained the upper hand. Donatist Christianity was mercilessly driven underground, and when it re-emerged in strength at the end of the sixth century AD, it was too late to arrest the general decline of Christianity that had already set in.

Augustine's brilliance was comparatively slow to show itself. At school he disliked Greek, and he moved through a normal career of grammar school at Madaura to the university at Carthage. Already, however, he was becoming interested in Latin philosophy, one of his main legacies from his pagan father. He studied Cicero's *Hortensius* with enthusiasm. His other interest was psychological – the problem of evil – and at first his mind was directed towards the Gnostic dualist solution, at this period represented by the sect of the Manichees. With the Manichees, too, acceptance of their tenets did not involve rejection of the pagan classics as was demanded by the Donatists. Augustine became a Hearer in the sect *c.* 373, but apparently never ceased to regard himself as a Christian. From that time Augustine prospered. He received a prize for rhetoric at the hands of the Proconsul Vindicianus in *c.* 379, and wider horizons than those provided by provincial Africa opened up. Meanwhile he was becoming disillusioned with the Manichees. He found their leader, Faustus of Milevis, ignorant and provincial, and, dissatisfied with Africa and the sect, he moved first to Rome (*c.* 382) and then, some two years later, to an appointment as public speaker at the court of Valentinian II at Milan. The provincial graduate had made good.

Augustine was three years at Milan, and there he came under the influence first of Neo-Platonism and then of the eloquent Christian expounder of the Neo-Platonist works, Bishop Ambrose. From the one he was able to free himself of the last encumbrances of Manichaeism by grasping that evil could better be understood as deprivation of good than as a positive force in itself. From Ambrose, he learnt how Neo-Platonist mysticism and idealism could be made compatible with Catholic Christianity. Still Milan held him, though by the summer of 385 he was enrolled among the catechumens of the Church. His real choice was more serious and more personal. For fifteen years he had a

mistress and she had born him a son; now he had to take a crucial decision. To pursue his career, to 'aspire to honour and money', there must also be marriage. His mother, Monnica, had joined him in Milan. The mistress was sent home, but the Italian heiress who was selected for him proved a disaster. All Augustine's concern for evil, sex and sin returned. The story of Victorinus, the Neo-Platonist philosopher of a generation before, who had conquered his pride to become a Christian, pointed the way to him. The tale of how monks converted two friends of a colleague to abstinence finally made up his mind. There followed the scene in the garden in Milan in August 386, his baptism in Ambrose's cathedral the following Easter, and eventually his return to Africa in 388 after the death of Monnica.

Augustine had been converted to the full implication of Christianity while in Italy. He had embraced what he accepted as a reasonable faith which placed the self-denial of asceticism among its highest goals. It was also a world-wide faith, the faith of a world empire as well as of Milan and Carthage. The casualty on the way to these conclusions had been the rustic, Judaistic Christianity of his mother. Now he had returned to Africa. For the Donatists he could have no sympathy, for however restricted its true members might be in the sight of God, the Church could not be confined to one province. After nearly a century, the Donatists had failed to win acceptance in the West as a whole. Then, if the Church was universal, so also must its sacraments be. Christ was their fount; the personal character of the minister counted for nothing. Hence the Donatist insistence on rebaptizing their converts was erroneous. So too, was their intransigent insistence that the state must always stand condemned as the counterpart of Babylon. An individual's adherence to Babylon or Jerusalem depended only on his personal will, or the direction of his love – as Augustine insisted. Then, the Donatist version of the origins of their dispute with the Catholics was manifestly false. Caecilian had been truly vindicated. Their own party contained *traditores*. They were the schismatics, and schism, denoting lack of charity, was the worst of sins.

The times favoured the re-emergence of the African Catholics. Parmenian's long government was followed by a disputed succession. Many Donatists, particularly those in the more romanized areas of Proconsular Africa and Byzacena, favoured a return to the lineage of Donatus, and supported a kinsman named Maximian. The Numidians opposed their choice. They doubted Maximian's vigour. In a series of manoeuvres in AD 392–4, they first repulsed a Maximianist attempt to

unseat their own candidate, Primian, for the see of Carthage; at a vast council of no less than 310 bishops held at Bagai in southern Numidia in 394, they condemned the Maximianists in unmeasured terms; and then within a short time they readmitted all who accepted Primian as true bishop of Carthage. Meantime, Augustine had become presbyter in 391, and then co-adjutor to the Bishop of Hippo, and finally in 396, himself Bishop of Hippo, a medium-sized port on the coast. Donatist quarrels were grist to his mill. He opened his account by writing to several Donatist bishops, trying to persuade them of the error of their Church. But he was not successful. The Donatists were still in the position to assert that theirs was the true Catholic Church in Africa, and their arguments were upheld in a series of cases heard before imperial officials between 394 and 397 which involved claims by the victorious Primianist party against the Maximianists. In the latter year, however, they weakened their position in the eyes of the imperial government by espousing the cause of the rebel, Gildo. Gildo was the brother of Firmus, who had rebelled without success a generation before, but in the interval he had built up a vast personal patrimony and had received the title of count from the emperor. What he intended to do had he proved victorious is unknown. Separatism does not seem likely. In 398 he was defeated, captured and executed, and one of the principal Donatist leaders, Optatus, Bishop of Thamugadi (Timgad) shared his fate.

Augustine saw his chance and from that moment never relaxed his efforts to destroy the Donatists. He was ably helped by his friends, Aurelius, Bishop of Carthage, and Alypius, Bishop of his native Thagaste, who could watch the situation in Numidia. His first object was to have the Donatists made liable to the current severe anti-heretical legislation. By 399 he had succeeded, and in a treatise 'Against the Letter of Parmenian' written that year, he pointed to an important legal decision that deprived a Donatist bishop of a legacy on the grounds that no heretic could benefit under a will. He felt matters were moving rapidly, '*valde velociter*'. In 403 a Donatist rejection of a conference demanded by Augustine was followed by Circumcellion attacks on Catholic clergy and property. Prompted by Augustine, the Catholics appealed to the emperor, and were rewarded by a series of severe laws in 405 aimed at suppressing the Donatists and enforcing unity on Catholic terms. From then on, Augustine supported the forceful suppression of Donatism. He had always had the use of the civil power in the back of his mind (in marked contrast to his insistence that the

Manichees, who had been proscribed by law for a century, should be convinced by argument and dealt with gently). From 405 onwards, Augustine began to use the quotation from Luke 14:23 – ‘Compel them to come in’ – with fateful consequences for the religious history of western Europe.¹

The persecution continued until 411. By that time the Donatists were ready at least to justify their position before the imperial authorities. The conference that took place under the aegis of the Tribune and Imperial Notary, Marcellinus, in May and June 411, was the last great occasion in the history of the Church of North Africa. Each side made strenuous efforts to assemble the largest support possible. In the end the Catholics mustered 286 bishops to their opponents’ 284. The debate lasted for three days, and ranged both over the history of the dispute and its doctrinal issues. Each participant had to stand up and identify himself, and from the list of bishops present, it is evident that the Donatists were in a majority in the country areas and in Numidia and Mauretania, while the Catholics prevailed among the more romanized areas of Proconsular Africa and Byzacena. Like recent nationalist movements, the Donatists represented the mass of peasantry, whose leaders were however drawn from the middle classes and often possessed legal training. The Catholics predominated among the possessing classes and the new aristocracy dependent on imperial patronage, the *honorati*, and were supported by the imperial government. The issue was hardly in doubt. The final day belonged to Augustine, who skilfully concentrated the argument on the historical origins of the dispute, where the Donatists were on weak ground. Marcellinus, who was a friend of Augustine, decided that the Catholics were the true Church in Africa. On 26 June he ordered the confiscation of Donatist churches and property and forbade the Donatists to hold services. On 30 January 412, the Emperor Honorius proscribed Donatism throughout the empire. The Donatist clergy were offered the alternatives of exile or submission.

The Catholic victory was followed by fifteen years of prosperity. While the remainder of the West was under constant threat of Germanic invasion and conquest, the African Catholics emerged as the most influential single force in western Christendom. From the moment the heretic Pelagius’s associate, Celestius, applied for ordination at Carthage in 411, the Africans had realized the danger to their predestinarian theology contained in Pelagius’s ideas. Almost single-handed, Augustine campaigned against these, and with the support of well-organized

¹ Augustine, *Letter*, 93.2.5.

THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

Church councils was able to bring such pressure on the papacy that Pope Zosimus was obliged in 418 to withdraw his qualified acceptance of Pelagius and condemned his doctrines outright. In a series of disciplinary cases between 417 and 422, the African Church asserted its right to independence in its internal affairs against interference by the papacy. In these years, the Catholic councils almost attained the splendour of the Donatist gatherings of a generation past. While the churches in Europe were in disarray, the African Catholics led by Augustine and Aurelius were establishing themselves as a powerful regional Church. This influence was accompanied by a great expansion in the Church's material prosperity. The Donatists complained of their rivals' wealth, and in these years the Catholics demonstrated the fact. At Cuicul (Djemila) in Mauretania, a Christian quarter complete with baptistery, churches and an episcopal palace was built, perhaps by Bishop Cresconius, who after 411 was bishop of a reunited Catholic and ex-Donatist community.¹ The town of Hippo boasted of no less than seven churches and a Christian quarter with buildings surrounding a large church and cemetery similar in style to that at Djemila. At Tipasa the vast seven-aisled basilica paved throughout with mosaic floors dates approximately to this period.² All over North Africa and especially in the towns, the late fourth and early fifth century AD marks the high-water mark of Christian architectural and artistic achievement. The African Catholics so long in the shadows had entered on a splendid heritage.

THE VANDAL INVASION AND THE ECLIPSE OF CHRISTIANITY IN NORTH-WEST AFRICA

In fact, their victory was pyrrhic. Donatism was not crushed. The Donatist leaders managed to hold councils, carry out ordinations, retain many of their churches, and defy the imperial authorities. There were unresolved social tensions. The Circumcellions may have been driven underground, but jealousy of the great landed proprietors remained. 'They alone live' was the murmur recorded by Augustine.³ Meantime,

¹ See E. Albertini, in *Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques*, 1922, 26-32, for the view that the Christian quarter may date to the late fourth rather than the fifth century; and that Cresconius's mosaic may have nothing to do with the discomfiture of the Donatists, see P. A. Février, *Le développement urbain en Afrique du Nord* (Paris, 1964), 18.

² Tipasa on the coast west of Algiers was a traditional Catholic centre which had defended itself successfully against Firmus in AD 373. On the great basilica built in honour of St Salsa, see S. Gsell, in *Mélanges de l'École Française à Rome*, 1894, 14, 290ff.

³ Augustine, *Sermo*, 345.1: 'Isti soli vivunt'. For evidence for the aristocratic nature of Augustine's congregation at Hippo, see Frend, *Donatist Church*, 327-8.

as Augustine was ageing, a new enemy was beginning to threaten the position of Christianity as a whole. Christianity had been extraordinarily successful in the towns and settled areas of North Africa, but had never made an impact on the tribes inhabiting the plateaux on the edge of the Sahara, nor, it appears, on the hill-tribes of the Aures and Kabyles, who were kept quiet by treaty relationships backed by internal *limes* fortifications. Neither the Donatists nor the Catholics seem ever to have undertaken missions comparable to those of the Syrian Monophysites to the Arab tribes on the edges of the settled areas along the Syrian frontier. This was unwise, for, as Augustine had written once to a Roman senator, 'not only along the frontiers, but throughout all the provinces [of Africa] we owe our peace to the sworn oaths of the barbarians'.¹ The African tribesmen seem simply to have fallen outside the perspective of the romanized town- and country-dwellers. The price of this error was to be high.

The progressive weakening of Roman military power in Africa had now given these tribesmen their opportunity to raid and plunder unrestrained by any concern for Christians. In 426 Augustine wrote to the military commander, Count Boniface, of the 'hordes of African barbarians, plundering and destroying without resistance'.² Two years later the situation had become intolerable. Quodvultdeus, Aurelius's archdeacon and successor at Carthage, referred to the burning of churches, and to the massacre of clergy and layfolk by the barbarians. The arrival of the Vandals in 429 completed the disaster which the African invaders had begun. Gaiseric is reported to have brought 80,000 Vandals with him, together with an undefined number of adventurers from the Goths and Alans. It was a great gamble, hazarding the very existence of his tribe, but it succeeded. By AD 435 Augustine was dead, Hippo had fallen, a relieving army had been heavily defeated and, according to Augustine's biographer, Possidius of Calama, only 'three churches' – Hippo, Cirta and Carthage – survived the orgy of pillage and devastation that accompanied Gaiseric's army. In 439 Carthage itself fell, and the wealthiest portion of North Africa lay at the mercy of the Vandals.

Possidius exaggerated, but it is none the less true that with the defeat of Boniface and the Roman forces, Roman rule collapsed. The Catholics could organize no resistance. The basis of their success had been too narrow. They failed to solve the social tensions in the provinces that had sustained Donatism.³ The story of Christianity in North Africa is from

¹ Augustine, *Letter*, 47.2.

² *Ibid.* 220.7.

³ Possidius admits, *Vita Augustini*, 23, that 'the clergy were hated because of their

now on one of continuous decline. The havoc caused by the *razzias* of the African tribesmen forbids full credence to be given to the statement written c. 487 by Victor of Vita (probably a Carthaginian cleric) that the Vandals entered on a rich and peaceful province. Divisions, combined with failure to attempt to convert and civilize the nomadic tribes beyond the *limes*, contributed powerfully to the ultimate extinction of Christianity in North Africa. An immense amount of damage, however, was caused by Gaiseric's army during three years of fighting, 429-32, and this was followed by a long period of intermittent persecution directed at the Catholics. Of the Donatists one hears little. They existed – some of their leaders were driven into exile in southern Gaul – and they regarded Gaiseric's rule in the same terms of diabolical inspiration as they had regarded that of the emperors, but, beyond the *Liber Genealogus* drawn up in successive editions between 427 and 463, they have left few written memorials for the Vandal period. Gaiseric was the one barbarian ruler who was actively hostile towards the western empire and the western Church, and he was determined to assert the predominance of the Arian Christianity of his people. Both Possidius of Calama and Victor of Vita (writing c. 487) give similar accounts. Victor in particular records how 'Gaiseric raged in particular against the churches and basilicas of the saints and the cemeteries of the martyrs and the monasteries' throughout a major part of his long reign.¹

Gaiseric had invaded North Africa to find land for his people and a kingdom for himself. The 'Catholic Church' and 'the nobility' had become almost synonymous. As the great landowners, they were the obvious targets for dispossession, and they were also in the process of carving out the *sortes Vandalorum* (the allocation of land for the conquerors). Moreover, to judge from the final rescripts of the Emperor Valentinian III to the African provinces, these measures could not have been unpopular with the North Africans themselves.² By the treaty of 442 with Valentinian III, which ceded the provinces of Proconsular Africa, Byzacena, Tripolitania and the eastern part of Numidia to the Vandals, that land-hunger had been satisfied. Indeed the Vandals never colonized Byzacena to any degree, and their influence diminished

possessions'. We hear of bishops acting as bailiffs on great estates as some of their number had in Cyprian's time (Council of Carthage 397, Canon 15).

¹ Possidius, *Vita Augustini*, 28; Victor Vitensis, *Historia persecutionis*, 1.4; compare also 1.6 and 1.9-11 for similar statements. Victor was a cleric on the staff of the Bishop of Carthage and seems to have had access to the archives of that see.

² See *Novel*, 12, 'De Pecunia Afris credita et Fidei iussoribus eorum', dated 19 October 443, where extortion by the rich against the poor provincials is described vividly. The rapacity of creditors 'exceeded that of the enemy', it was claimed.

rapidly the further west into Numidia one proceeded. Of all the Germanic kingdoms that established themselves in the western empire during the fifth century, the legacy of the Vandals was the least. Much of what is known of the policies of their rulers in North Africa comes from hostile clerical chroniclers, and concerns their struggle to repress the former Catholic aristocracy. Both Gaiseric and his son and successor Huneric (477–84) aimed at maintaining the Arian interpretation of Christianity as their Vandal religion. In common with other Germanic tribes during the fourth century, they had accepted Arianism from missionaries from the Danube provinces of the empire, and it now served to distinguish them from the great majority of their North African subjects. Perhaps to emphasize the relative positions of the two peoples, Gaiseric kept the see of Carthage vacant between 440 and 454, when he finally allowed the Catholics to consecrate Deogratias as bishop. In 457, however, the latter was exiled, and no new consecration was made until the time of Zeno's treaty with the Vandal kingdom in 481. In the same spirit of harassment, Gaiseric is alleged by Victor to have forbidden Catholic episcopal vacancies to be filled in the provinces of Zeugitana and Proconsular Africa. The Vandals were determined to keep themselves separated from the Catholic Africans.¹ Thus in Proconsular Africa, where the Vandals were most thickly settled, the number of Catholic bishops declined from 164, apparently the full establishment in the archive of the Church in Carthage, to 3. While Victor may have been reporting a particular moment of acute crisis, there is little doubt that Gaiseric's acts inflicted a succession of blows on the Catholic party from which it never completely recovered.

Gaiseric died in January 477. Under his three successors, Huneric (477–84), Gunthamund (484–96) and Thrasamund (496–523), the Catholics continued to suffer sporadic but sometimes violent persecution. In May 483, Huneric summoned the Catholic bishops from all over the Vandal empire, including Sardinia and the Balearic Islands, for a conference to be held on 1 February 484 between Catholic and Arian representatives. A curious list (the *Notitia provinciarum et civitatum Africae*) purports to record the bishops to whom summonses were sent. It contains no less than 466 names, including 54 from Proconsular Africa, but a disproportionate number of 120 from Mauretania Caesar-iensis, which lay effectively outside the Vandal dominions. The *Notitia*

¹ The policy is quite evident from the opening words of Huneric's decree of 20 May 483, preserved in Victor, *Historia*, II. 39: 'Non semel sed saepius constat esse prohibitum ut in sortibus Vandalorum sacerdotes vestri conventus minime celebrarent.' Vandal clergy even went to outlying Vandal settlements such as Tipasa; see Victor, *Historia*, III. 29.

presents a problem which has not been solved completely, but if it is not entirely valueless it suggests that in the previous decade or so the Catholics had recovered some lost ground.¹ Perhaps the Vandals were not too concerned about the situation outside the area they had reserved for their own settlement (the *sortes Vandalorum*). In Carthage itself the Catholics could claim 500 clergy! Huneric's reaction to the fruitless gathering, however, was to impose on the Catholics the same anti-heretical laws that in their time they had imposed on the Donatists. They were given the choice of conversion to Arianism or exile, and many bishops were exiled under harsh conditions. In 502, prominent Catholic bishops were deported from Africa, some to Vandal-held Sardinia. Like the measures taken against the Donatists after the conference of 411, these actions failed to achieve their aim. The *Life* of Fulgentius of Ruspe (465-527), who became Bishop of Ruspe in 499 and was among the exiles, throws some light on the reasons.

The Vandal population was small in comparison with that of the Romano-Africans, and included too few individuals able to administer their territories. Outside the *sortes Vandalorum*, administration had to be left to the local aristocracy, who were nearly always Catholics. Fulgentius himself had been a senior official (*procurator*) in Byzacena as a young man before he became attracted towards monasticism. Monasteries, we learn from his *Life*, were being founded by wealthy Catholic laymen on good agricultural land, and provided continuity and cohesion among the Catholic communities when their bishops were exiled. The Catholics, moreover, maintained an intellectual ascendancy over their Arian rivals. Apart from Thrasamund himself, whom Fulgentius treated as an equal, no serious defender of the Arian position arose. Fulgentius, sure of his theology derived from the tradition of Augustine, and enjoying the support of the papacy, wrote with authority even in the long periods of exile he spent in Sardinia. There is some evidence that individual Vandals were influenced by the religion of the conquered provincials. Victor records some cases of Vandal 'confessors'. An inscription from Thibiuca records the dedication by a certain Hegerit 'to God and St Felix' in the church there. Felix was the local martyr, a victim of the Great Persecution.² Despite all that their

¹ See C. Courtois, *Victor de Vita et son oeuvre* (Algiers, 1954), 91-100, on the successive phases of the compilation of the *Notitia*.

² Recorded by J. Cintas and G. L. Fenille, 'Eglise et Baptistère de Thibiuca', *Karthago*, 1953, 2, 205. Compare the discovery of Vandal burials in the Catholic (or Donatist) churches at Ammaedara (Haidra) and Mactar in Tunisia. Listed by C. Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (Algiers and Paris, 1955), 386-7, nos. 160, 164, 169 (Cherchell) and 170 (Tipasa).

rulers could do, by the first decade of the sixth century AD the Vandals were beginning to be absorbed into the mass of the Afro-Latin population. In this respect the religious and social history of North Africa resembles that of Burgundy, Spain and Italy at this period.

There was a further point of resemblance between North Africa and the barbarian successor states in the western Roman empire, namely the astonishing vigour of the Latin language. One would expect this among ecclesiastics, but Vandal Africa produced poets such as Luxorius and Dracontius, and even humble versifiers who found scope for reminiscences of Virgil on their tombs. The Vandal challenge awoke in the North African provincials a sense of cultural identity expressed through the Latin language and silent adherence to the Roman empire represented by the emperor at Constantinople.¹ If ever North-West Africa looked like becoming a Romance-speaking area, it was during the fifth and early sixth centuries AD.

Significant changes were, however, taking place in the social and economic life of North-West Africa which were to prevent Catholicism from regaining the power it possessed on the eve of the Vandal invasion, and Latin from becoming the basis of a Mediterranean African language. Outside the immediate neighbourhood of Carthage and the Tunisian coastlands, the African towns on which Church organization had been based were declining irrevocably. Lepcis Magna was becoming choked with encroaching sand. Timgad and Bagai were abandoned in face of the ever-increasing depredations of the Aures mountaineers; silt and rubbish lay a metre deep over the forums of Sbeitla and Dougga. Only one civil building, the baths at Tunes (Tunis), can be dated beyond dispute to the century of Vandal rule. Urban life as it had been understood even in the fourth century had come to an end.²

The countryside by contrast remained relatively prosperous. The *Tablettes Albertini*, discovered in what today is wilderness 100 km south of Theveste, indicate that the rural population were still *coloni* cultivating their land under the terms of the Lex Mancianae as they had two centuries before. The only indication that this evidence dates to the Vandal period is the mention of the reigning monarch, Gunthamund. Otherwise it

¹ An appeal for intervention by the Emperor Zeno on behalf of the African Catholics was the main reason for Victor of Vita's writing his history of the persecution of the African Catholics; Victor, *Historia*, III.65 and 68.

² The writer's personal observation at both Sbeitla and Dougga and also Thuburbo Maius. Much more could have been learnt about the decline of North African urban life had proper record been made of the layers of silt dividing the Roman from Byzantine occupation in these and other centres. For the Byzantines rebuilding cities *a fundamentis*, see *CIL*, 8, 4677/16869 (Madauros) and 1863/16507 (Theveste).

reflects landed society unchanged from the late Roman period. There was a great estate owned by Flavius Geminius Catullinus in which new vineyards were being planted, and the level of well-being among the cultivators was relatively high. To judge from inscriptions in Donatist Churches, churches continued to be built and repaired. Ain Ghorab, Ain Ateuch and Henchir Tarlist are examples from Numidia. Towards the end of the sixth century, the Latin poet Corippus looked back to Vandal times as a golden age in rural Byzacena.

The new factor in the situation was the emergence of Berber Africa, whether in the form of the tribal kingdoms in the Kabyles, the Aures and the mountains south-west of Tunis, or in the confederation of camel-riding nomads encroaching from the desert to the south and south-east of the Vandal domain. The tribes had always existed, sometimes restive, scarcely touched by nominal treaty relationships with the Roman authorities. Now they came into their own. After the death of Gaiseric, the Vandals gradually lost control, first of the Aures massif, then of the whole area west of Ain Beida, including Timgad, and finally of Tripolitania and most of Byzacena. The kingdoms established by the mountain chieftains in western Numidia and Mauretania resemble, in their retention of Latin and Roman titles, the petty Celtic kingdoms that grew out of the wreckage of Roman Britain. At the turn of the sixth century AD, these kingdoms, though fiercely independent of the Vandals, still used Latin as an official language and the Roman system of provincial dating, and retained Christianity, but the purely native African element was also coming to the surface again after four centuries of Roman rule. The group of royal tombs known as the Djedar in Mauretania 200 km east of Altava, which are dated later than 480, were built in the style of the pre-Roman Medracen, the tomb of the Numidian kings, though in one case the Christian faith of its owner is also affirmed, with the inscription *Spes in Deo* cut on the lintel.¹ Farther west in the region of the Oued Chelif, far beyond the Vandal frontier, there is surprising evidence for the continuation of Roman and Christian influence. The old military settlements of Pomaria, Altava and Albulae have produced no less than fifty Christian inscriptions written in good Latin by dedicants with Latin names but who lived between 450 and 655, another indication that the emergent Berber kingdoms fully deserve the title of sub-Roman.² It would be interesting to know

¹ Described by Marcel Christophe, *Le tombeau de la Chrétienne* (Paris, 1951), and see Courtois, *Les Vandales*, 335.

² Courtois, *Les Vandales*, 336-8. The same is true of the area of Volubilis in Morocco, where Latin-Christian inscriptions dating to the seventh century have been found. See R.

whether the ordinary language spoken was Romance, or Berber and African. With the nomads, however, it was a different story. The confederation known as the Louata, who were beginning to migrate westwards along the old Roman frontier from Cyrenaica, cared nothing for the civilization and religion of the town-folk and farmers in their way. They were worshippers of Baal-Hammon, as their ancestors had been centuries before. The Vandals were no match for them. By the end of Thrasamund's reign, the royal army had been heavily defeated and the Louata were firmly ensconced under their king, Antalas, on the plains of southern Byzacena. This was a decisive moment in the history of North-West Africa.

The rise of the independent Berber kingdoms in the second half of the Vandal occupation dashed any hope of a restoration of the status quo in the wake of declining Vandal Africa. Over a large part of the territory, the Berbers would remain independent. Thrasamund had been succeeded in AD 523 by Hilderic, the son of Huneric and the Byzantine princess Eudocia. His sympathies were strongly Catholic: exiled bishops were restored to their sees, and the Church sprang into life. In Byzacena particularly, new church councils were assembled at Junca and Sufes. In 525 Boniface held a two-day gathering at Carthage of more than 200 bishops from all over Vandal Africa. Though Hilderic was deposed in a conspiracy in 530, his successor Gelimer (530-4) could not reverse the tide before Belisarius landed in 533 to destroy the Vandal kingdom and with it the Germanic Arian religion in North Africa. Within a year, a century of Vandal rule had collapsed and perished, leaving hardly a trace. The Catholics hailed the Byzantine victory with enthusiasm. As in 412 religious unity could be restored on their terms. In more than one church in Byzacena the priest in charge was commemorated as a *presbyter unitatis*.

Justinian had sanctioned Belisarius's expedition ostensibly to bring relief to the North African Catholics. This was accomplished by the publication of the edict of 1 August 535 which restored Catholicism in toto to the position of unchallenged authority. The inheritance on which the Byzantines entered was an impoverished one. Beyond Proconsular Africa and the coastal area of Byzacena, the former provinces had to be reconquered from the mountaineers and nomads. In the next twenty years, the Byzantine armies were generally speaking successful against the one, but failed to check the inroads of the other. By 550 Byzantine

Thouvenot, 'Les origines chrétiennes en Mauretanie Tingitane', *Revue des Études Anciennes*, 1969, 71, 375-7.

authority had been extended to cover Tripolitania (with a great fortress far to the south of Lepcis at Zuila), most of Byzacena to the line of the Tunisian Chotts, and westwards to the boundary of Mauretania Sitifensis, with outposts along the coast still further west. Beyond were the Berber kingdoms. But within this area, the mountains were held by hostile tribes, kept in submission only by chains of massive fortresses erected at vast expense. Former Roman cities such as Theveste, Ammaedara, Mactar, Dougga and Thuburbo Maius were pillaged of their monuments to provide the massive blocks of masonry for the fortresses that sealed off the town centres from their once flourishing suburbs. New and heavy taxes were imposed and a draconian land survey was carried out to ensure that the provincials paid for their own defence and administration. There was little security beyond the fortress walls. The nomad raiders, with their camels and herds and barbaric gods, form a permanent part of the scene in Byzantine Africa. No part of the country was safe from them. North Africa was taking a long step back to the tribalism and subsistence agriculture of the pre-Roman era.

Efforts were made to restore both the cities and the churches within them. Lepcis Magna was rebuilt on the emperor's orders; a great church was built within the wall of the civil basilica of Septimius Severus. In Byzacena, Sbeitla and Thelepte became Christian centres again, with fine churches and baptisteries. Within the Byzantine fortresses there were churches and chapels, though little – perhaps too little – evidence has been found to establish the character of urban life in this period. At Carthage itself the port was developed and new baths erected in honour of the Empress Theodora. There was administrative activity and some intellectual fervour. Within fifteen years of the official restoration of Catholicism, the North Africans had already resumed their role as active critics of imperial intervention in Church affairs. The Carthaginian deacon, Liberatus, and Facundus, Bishop of Hermiane in Byzacena, were among the few effective critics of Justinian's policy aimed at condemning the Three Chapters. The tradition of support for decision by councils reinforced a conviction in favour of the Two-Nature Christology championed by Rome and the West for centuries. The Definition of Chalcedon was upheld against every effort to undermine its authority from whatever quarter. In 550 the Africans, in the same spirit of independence from pope and emperor that they had shown in the decade before the Vandal invasion, excommunicated Pope Vigilius because of his wavering.

Their opponents denounced this attitude as 'Donatist', but this was only literary invective. The falsity of the charge, however, should not blind the historian to the Donatist character of the stirrings in the reconquered Numidian countryside. During the last half of the sixth century, the papacy acquired considerable estates in this area. From the correspondence between Pope Gregory (590-604) and his agent Bishop Columbus (probably of Nicivibus - N'gaous in south-west Numidia), one hears of a development which can only be interpreted as the re-emergence of Donatism. In the first year of his episcopate, Gregory wrote to the Exarch of Byzantine Africa requesting him to deal with heretics, and in 591 these heretics are identified as Donatists who were bribing Catholic clergy in some of the south Numidian towns to gain their acquiescence in the election of Donatist clergy. For the next six years, the danger of the 'execrable wickedness of the Donatists creeping up into importance' in Numidia was a recurring theme of Gregory's letters to North Africa.¹

It has indeed been argued that Gregory had mistaken the danger, and that what he was witnessing was the emergence of serious provincial independence through the local Catholic clergy.² Gregory, however, was advised by an experienced agent, and jealous though the Numidian Catholics were of their privileges, no amount of obduracy would have brought down on their heads Gregory's demand addressed to Pantaleo, the Praefectus Praetorio and senior imperial officer in the west, that they should be punished as Donatist heretics. Byzantine churches that have been excavated in southern Numidia, with their dedications to non-canonical martyrs, their reliquaries and their inscriptions relating to persecution, show continuity in rite and outlook with the churches of two centuries before. Southern Numidia had lain outside Vandal control except for occasional punitive expeditions against the Aures mountaineers. The return of the Byzantines meant the return of exploitation by absentee landlords and grasping officials, factors to encourage the resurgence of Donatism. So far as the religious life of the people was concerned, only the importation of some specifically Eastern saints into the Numidian martyrology distinguished their chapels from those of two centuries before.

¹ Gregory, *Letters*, 1.72; compare 1.82, 11.33 and 46, and 111.32. It is doubtful whether Catholics, however independent they may have felt themselves to be with regard to the papacy, would imitate Donatist custom and rebaptize converted opponents.

² For instance, by R. A. Markus, 'Religious dissent in North Africa in the Byzantine period', in C. J. Cuming, ed., *Studies in church history*, 111 (Leiden, 1966), 149; and compare his 'Donatism, the last phase', in *ibid.* 1 (Leiden, 1964), 118-26.

The early years of the seventh century AD saw the North African provinces again play an important part in the affairs of the Byzantine empire. In 608, the Exarch Heraclius used Carthage as the starting-point for his successful revolution against the tyrannical Emperor Phocas. So long as Heraclius ruled, the links between North Africa and Constantinople remained close. The exarchate was held by officials of high standing, such as the Patrician Peter (died 637). At Carthage and in the coastal towns, the Catholic episcopate remained vigorous enough to denounce the Monothelite doctrines of Heraclius and his successor Constans II at a council held in 645. The celebrated Maximus the Confessor lived in Carthage between 640 and 646, and there debated triumphantly with Pyrrhus, the Monothelite leader, before the Exarch Gregory.

This activity could not, however, disguise the decline of Christianity as a cultural and religious influence in the province as a whole. Churches in the seventh century were shoddy in comparison with those built in the previous century. Even the church dedicated by the Exarch Gregory at Timgad in 645 can barely be distinguished from the small native structures that surrounded it. In Numidia the churches were now not essentially different from the rectangular native *gourbis* in which the inhabitants dwelt. The last dated Christian inscription in Numidia, from a chapel at the foot of the Jebel Teioualt and recording the solemn deposition of relics by five bishops, was written in execrable Latin that has taken nearly forty years of scholarly effort to decipher. Only in the far west in the former province of Mauretania Caesariensis, as already mentioned, did something of the one-time vigour of Christian civilization survive. On the eve of the Arab invasion, there could be no greater contrast between the situation in the Maghrib and that in Egypt.

The last phase of Mediterranean North-West Africa in the Christian period is wrapped in legends preserved by the Arab chroniclers. By 642, however, the Arabs had occupied Cyrenaica and five years later they invaded the Maghrib. On the plains near Sbeitla, by then apparently the second most important city in the province, Gregory was completely defeated. Though another generation was to elapse before Byzantine authority in Byzacena and Numidia was to cease, the civilization that had been built up over the previous seven centuries was now in irredeemable decline. Geography turned to the disadvantage of urban and settled life. The plains of Byzacena and Numidia became open to incursions from the Arab armies and the equally formidable Berber nomadic tribes. With the murder of the Emperor Constans II in Sicily

in 668, the last effort to restore Byzantine power in the western Mediterranean and North Africa came to an end. The succession of battles fought between the Berbers and Arab invaders in the last thirty years of the seventh century took place on desert tracks and near water supplies vital for the survival of nomad armies. The towns and villages of Romano-African civilization no longer counted. Carthage itself had become an isolated outpost when it fell finally to Ḥasan b. al-Nu'mān in 698. Nor was the battle one between Christians and Islam. No Christian leader emerged as heir to the Byzantines. The famous Berber queen, the Kāhina, who fought the final valiant struggle against the Arabs between 690 and 698, may even have been a Jewess. What had happened to the organization of the Church during this period is unknown, for on their final defeat at Bir el-Kahena in 698 many of the Berber tribes accepted Islam rather than pay tribute to the Arabs.¹ Then, to quote the Arab historian Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam:

The Lawāta later [i.e. after the defeat of the Byzantines] split up and spread over this part of the Maghrib [Tripolitania and Tunisia] until they reached Sousse. The Hawarra established themselves at Lebda and the Nefusa in the territory of Sabratha. The Rum [i.e. Byzantines] who were occupying these lands were forced to leave, but the Afāriq who were subject to the Rum remained, paying a tribute which they were accustomed to render to all who occupied their country.²

That is to say, the Byzantines left: the Berber farming population remained behind until they too were slowly driven into the mountains by the nomads. Christianity and Latin civilization gradually died out amid the ruin of the olive plantations and villages of its adherents. By AD 700 the Christian period in North-West Africa had for all practical purposes ended.

¹ A similar phenomenon was observed among the Fezzan tribes a century later. See the discussion of a ninth-century text by R. Brunschvig, 'Un texte arabe du IXe siècle intéressant le Fezzan', *Revue Africaine*, 1945, 89, 21-5.

² Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Ifriqiya wa'l Andalus*; ed. and trans. into French by A. Gateau (Algiers, 1942), 31. Also see Frend, 'North Africa and Europe in the Early Middle Ages', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1955, 5, 5, 61-81.

1940s, is still a very recent publication (1967-71) and its possible uses as a source for the prehistory of the area are as yet relatively unexplored. It has been widely judged that Guthrie seriously misinterpreted the historical conclusions to be drawn from his own work, but his collection of basic data stands, not only as a monument, but as a mine awaiting much further exploitation than it has yet received.

7. THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

The Christian period in Mediterranean Africa was an era of civilization wholly different from that which preceded and followed it. It produced great theologians and men of action, such as Athanasius and Augustine, passionate debates concerning both Christian belief and the nature of Christian society, and movements within the Church, such as monasticism, which have affected Christendom profoundly. A bibliography attempting to cover the ideas, personalities and social movements of the period would be huge and unwieldy. It will not be attempted here. A student of the period would be advised to consult the list of sources at the end of Jones, *The later Roman Empire* (1964), Volume II, pp. 1464-76; Altaner and Stuiber, *Patrologie (Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter)*, 7th edn (1964), under 'Athanasius', 'Augustinus', 'Cyrillus von Alexandrien' etc; and the bibliographies contained in Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 2nd edn (1971), and *The rise of the Monophysite movement* (1972). This essay restricts itself to the primary sources used in this chapter, and a brief bibliography of selected secondary works.

Egypt and Cyrenaica

Papyri provide the basis for a study of the social background to the rise of Christianity in Egypt and also shed light on the outlook of Egyptian Christians. The volumes of the Oxyrhynchus papyri published by the Egypt Exploration Society (1898—) are a primary source of information. The increasing difficulties of the middle classes in Egypt during the third century are shown graphically in a series of papyri (PO 1412-19) recording sessions of the senate of Oxyrhynchus in the second half of the third century; PO 2601 and 2673 provide some details of how the Great Persecution was carried out. Papyrus *libelli* of the persecution of Decius in 250 have been published by Knipfing, 'The *Libelli* of the Decian persecution' (1923), and there have been additions to the collection since. Christian texts circulating in Egypt have been published by Grenfell and Hunt, eds., *Oxyrhynchus papyri* ['Logia Jesu'] (1897), and

7. THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

'New sayings of Jesus', and 'Fragment of a lost gospel' (1904). These 'sayings' turned out to be fragments of the *Gospel of Thomas*, a complete copy of which was found in the library of Gnostic documents from Nag-Hammadi. (An English translation of some complete Gnostic works from this collection is by Foerster, *A selection of Gnostic texts* (1974).) *Fragments of an unknown gospel*, dating to the first decades of the second century with phraseology suggestive of both Luke and John, were published by Bell and Skeat on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum in 1935. In 1941 the clearance of rubbish from caves at Tura south of Cairo revealed a small papyrus library of patristic works, written probably in the sixth century, but including Origen's *Contra Celsum*, Bks I–VI, a hitherto unknown *Dialogue with Heracleides*, and gospel commentaries by Didymus the Blind (c. 390). The editio princeps of the *Dialogue* is that of Scherer, under the title *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide et les évêques, ses collègues, sur le Père, le Fils et l'Âme* (1949). Finally, successive volumes of the Bodmer collection of papyri, *Papyrus Bodmer*, contain important early Christian works circulating in Egypt, such as the Acts of Phileas and Philoromus; see *Papyrus Bodmer*, xx, ed. by Martin (1964).

Tools of study would be dominated by Opitz's magisterial *Athanasius' Werke* (1934—), and *Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung der Schriften der Athanasius* (1935), but for Opitz's death on the Russian front in 1941, which prevented their completion. As it is, a great deal of work on Athanasius, Didymus the Blind, and Cyril remains to be done. For the post-Chalcedonian period, the valuable series of studies published in the *Journal of Theological Studies* (1970—) by Ebeid and Wickham on Syriac manuscript sources relating to the works of Timothy the Cat and the Monophysite patriarchs of Alexandria are steadily widening the scope of knowledge on the complex problem of Christianity in Byzantine Egypt.

The major secondary sources are: Bell, *Jews and Greeks in Egypt* (1924), the second part of which is particularly valuable for relations between Athanasius and the Meletians, and *Egypt from Alexander the Great to the Arab conquest* (1948); Frend, *The rise of the Monophysite movement* (1972); Hardy, *The large estates of Byzantine Egypt* (1931), and *Christian Egypt, church and people* (1952), useful for the Meletians and later development of monasticism; Maspero, *Papyrus grecs de l'époque byzantine*, 3 vols. (1910–16); Leipoldt, 'Schenute von Atripe und die Entstehung des national-ägyptischen Christentums' (1904); and Woodward, *Christianity and nationalism in the later Roman Empire* (1916), rather dated, but a classic statement of the non-theological influences on heresy and

schism. On Egyptian monasticism, see Lietzmann, *Geschichte der alten Kirche* (1944), iv, Chapter 4, and the excellent chapter by de Labriolle in Palanque, Bardy and de Labriolle, *De la paix Constantinienne à la mort de Théodose* (Vol. 3 of Fliche and Martin, *Histoire de l'église* (1947)), which includes a bibliography. For Chalcedon and post-Chalcedon in Egypt, see the essays in A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht's monumental *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, Vols. I and II (1951-3).

North-West Africa

The primary source of equivalent importance to the Oxyrhynchus papyri for the study of the Christian period in North-West Africa is the volumes of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, esp. VIII, *Africa*, ed. by Wilmanns (1881-1916), supplemented by Gsell and Pflaum, *Inscriptions latines d'Algérie* (1923-57), and Cagnat and Merlin, *Inscriptions latines d'Afrique* (1923). These, together with the North African inscriptions published in the *Année épigraphique* (Paris, 1888 onwards), form an almost inexhaustible supply of basic material on many aspects of life and thought throughout the Roman, Vandal and Byzantine occupations. Monographs on individual sites include Monceaux, *Timgad chrétien* (1911); Allais, *Djemila* (1938); Marec, *Hippone* (1950); Leschi, *Tipasa* (1950); and Berthier, *Tiddis* (1954); all of these had large Christian quarters as well as the Roman city.

For the study of Donatism, an understanding of the historical geography of Roman North Africa is essential. Gsell's great work, *Atlas archéologique de l'Algérie*, published in 1911 when the population was still relatively small and ancient sites less subject to disturbance than at present, remains the starting-point for research. Some of the results of this work have been incorporated by Lancel in Vols. I and IV of his study of North African Donatism and Catholicism, based on the record of the disputation at Carthage between the two communities in June 411 (see *Sources chrétiennes*, vol. 195, under the title, 'Actes de la conférence de Carthage'). The text of the proceedings have been preserved in Migne, *PL*, XI, 1223-1420, together with texts of imperial laws against the Donatists.

Between 1935 and 1940, many rural sites in Numidia were surveyed, and some were partially excavated by André Berthier, director of the '7e Circonscription archéologique' centred on Constantine. Though paucity of datable material often prevented an adequate distinction between sites occupied in the later Roman and those occupied in the Byzantine period, Berthier's *Les Vestiges du Christianisme antique dans*

7. THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN

la Numidie centrale (1942), written in collaboration with LOGEART and Martin, remains the basic work of Christian archaeology in rural Numidia.

On the literary side, the works of Tertullian, Cyprian, Optatus of Milevis, Augustine, and the sixth-century writers Liberatus of Carthage and Facundus of Hermiana are all available in standard collections of Patristic texts. The *Acta* of the North African martyrs can best be studied in Musurillo's *The acts of the Christian martyrs* (1972).

Donatist *Acta martyrum* are preserved in PL VIII, cols. 698–784. Dominating the whole field of North African Christian history down to 411 is Monceaux's seven-volume *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne* (1901–23). This is a great work, a landmark in the scholarly study of Christian North Africa and of permanent value to all who research into its problems. Barnes, *Tertullian, a historical and literary study* (1971), despite its controversial tone, is a useful contribution towards understanding Tertullian's pagan background. Saumagne's *Cyprien, évêque de Carthage, 'Pape' d'Afrique* (1975) is a challenging and individual interpretation of Cyprian's career, and this may be said also of Tengström's interpretation of Donatism in *Donatisten und Katholiken* (1964). Brown's *Augustine of Hippo, a biography* (1967), and *Religion and society in the age of St Augustine* (1972), have become classic studies of Augustine and his age. The social history of the fourth century is treated by Diesner, *Der Untergang der römischen Herrschaft in Nordafrika* (1964).

The literature on Vandal Africa is dominated by C. Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (1955), and the study of the Vandal period tablets relating to property rates near Theveste by Courtois, Leschi, Perrat and Saumagne, *Tablettes Albertini, actes privées de l'époque vandale* (1952).

No great work has been written to succeed Diehl's classic *L'Afrique byzantine* (1896) for Africa during the Byzantine reconquest; the partial study of Markus, 'Donatism, the last phase' (1964), and Février and Duval's 'Inscription martyrologique sur plomb de la région de Telergma (AD 637)' (1969), are useful. The transition from Byzantine to Arab Africa is chronicled by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futūḥ Ifriqiya wa'l Andalus* [*The conquest of Africa and Andalusia*], ed. and trans. into French by A. Gateau (1942). Gautier's *Le Passé de l'Afrique du Nord* (1937) and Frend's 'North Africa and Europe in the early Middle Ages' (1955) may be helpful.

The major secondary works are as follows: Berthier, Logeart and Martin, *Les Vestiges du Christianisme antique dans la Numidie centrale* (1942); Brisson, *Autonomisme et Christianisme dans l'Afrique romaine de*

Septime Sévère à l'invasion vandale (1958); Brown, *Augustine of Hippo, a biography* (1967); Buonaiuti, *Il Cristianesimo nell' Africa Romana* (1928); Diesner, *Der Untergang der römischen Herrschaft in Nordafrika* (1964); Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 2nd edn (1971); Tengström, *Donatisten und Katholiken* (1964); Warmington, *The North African provinces from Diocletian to the Vandal conquest* (1954); and Frend, *Religion popular and unpopular in the early Christian centuries* (1976) – the writer's articles on Athanasius, the Circumcellions, early Nubian Christianity etc.

8. THE ARAB CONQUEST AND THE RISE OF ISLAM IN NORTH AFRICA

The principal source is the Arabic literature of the Middle Ages, represented for this purpose by a series of regional and confessional, but closely interconnected, traditions. These developed through successive works of synthesis, many of which are now lost, to culminate in the major collections of the period from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century AD.

As far as Egypt is concerned, the central work in the Muslim tradition is that of the tenth-century al-Kindī, *Governors and judges of Egypt*, ed. by Guest (1912), supplemented by the ninth-century work of Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *The history of the conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain*, ed. by Torrey (1922), and the very much later work of the fifteenth-century al-Maqrizī, *Al-Mawā'iz wa 'l-I'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa 'l-āthār*, usually called *Khiṭaṭ*, ed. by Wiet (1911); the introductions by Guest and Torrey give useful accounts of the growth of the tradition. An important source from outside Egypt is the ninth-century Iraqi writer al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb futūḥ al-Bulḍān* (various editions from that of de Goeje (1863–6) onwards) whose work, dealing with the whole subject of the Arab conquests east and west, overlaps that of Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam but, unlike the Egyptian author, does not deal with the pre-Islamic period. Additional information is provided by the geographical writer al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-Bulḍān*, ed. by de Goeje (1892); French trans. by Wiet, *Le Livre des pays* (1937).

The Christian sources are initially the compilation attributable in whole or in part to John, Bishop of Nikiou at the end of the seventh century, surviving only in an Ethiopic version, the *Chronique de Jean, Évêque de Nikiou*, ed. and trans. by Zotenberg (1883). The main work is the *History of the Coptic patriarchs of Alexandria*, as compiled for this period by the tenth-century Sāwīrūs (Severus) b. Muqaffa', ed. and

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GENERAL

The following bibliographical and reference works are of value to the study of the period covered by this volume as a whole. Space permits only a very selective list, which does not purport to be comprehensive.

The most complete guide to the literature of African studies available is P. Duignan's *Guide to research and reference works on sub-Saharan Africa*, Stanford, 1971. This most valuable work should be consulted for further information.

General bibliographies

Altaner, B. and Stuiber, A. *Patrologie (Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter)*, 7th edn. Freiburg, 1964. [Bibliography.]

Blaudin de Thé, Cdt. *Essai de bibliographie du Sahara français et des régions avoisinantes*. Paris, 1960.

Brasseur, Paule. *Bibliographie générale du Mali*. Dakar, 1964.

Cooke, C. K. 'A bibliography of Rhodesian archaeology from 1874', *Arnoldia*, 1974, 6, 38, 1-56.

Freund, W. H. C. *The Donatist Church*, 2nd edn. Oxford, 1971. [Bibliography.]

Freund, W. H. C. *The rise of the Monophysite movement*. Cambridge, 1972. [Bibliography.]

Gadallah, E. 'Meroitic problems and a comprehensive Meroitic bibliography', *Kush*, 1963, 11, 196-216.

Jones, A. H. M. *The later Roman Empire*. Oxford and Norman, Oklahoma, 1964. [Bibliography, Vol. II, 1464-76.]

Julien, C-A. *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord*. Paris, 1951 and 1952, 2 vols. English trans. by J. Petrie, ed. by C. C. Stewart. London, 1970. [Bibliography by C. C. Stewart.]

Levtzion, N. *Ancient Ghana and Mali*. London, 1973. [Bibliography.]

Mauny, R. 'Bibliographie de la préhistoire et de la protohistoire de l'Ouest africain', *Bulletin de l'IFAN* (sér. B), 1967, 29, 879-917; 1970, 32, 333-40.

General works

Ajayi, J. F. A. and Crowder, M. eds. *History of West Africa*, Vol. 1, 2nd edn. London, 1976.

Arkell, A. J. *A history of the Sudan to AD 1821*. London, 1955; 2nd edn, 1961; reprinted 1973.

Baumann, H., Thurnwald, R. and Westermann, D. *Völkerkunde Afrikas*. Essen, 1940. French trans., *Les peuples et les civilisations de l'Afrique*. Paris, 1948.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cambridge ancient history*, Vols. III–VI, Cambridge, 1925–7; Vols VII–XII, Cambridge, 1928–39.
- Cambridge history of Islam*, ed. by B. Lewis, P. M. Holt and A. K. S. Lambton. Cambridge, 1972. 2 vols.
- Cambridge medieval history*, Vol. II. Cambridge, 1913.
- Cary, M. and Warming, E. H. *The ancient explorers*, revised edn. London, 1963.
- Douglas, M. and Kaberry, P. eds. *Man in Africa*. London, 1969.
- Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Leiden and London, 1913–38; 2nd edn [letters A–K] in progress from 1954.
- Gautier, E.-F. *Le Passé de l'Afrique du Nord: les siècles obscurs*, 2nd edn. Paris, 1952.
- Gibb, H. A. R. and Kramers, J. H. eds. *The shorter encyclopaedia of Islam*. Leiden and London, 1961.
- Gray, R. and Birmingham, D. eds. *Precolonial African trade*. London, 1970.
- Gsell, S. *Histoire ancienne de l'Afrique du Nord*. Paris, 1913–29. 8 vols.
- Hiernaux, J. *The people of Africa*. London, 1974.
- The Jewish encyclopaedia*. New York, 1916.
- Julien, C.-A. *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord*, Vol. I, *Des origines à la conquête arabe*, 2nd edn (revised by C. Courtois). Paris, 1951. Vol. II, *De la conquête arabe à 1830* (revised by R. Le Tourneau), Paris, 1952. English trans. by J. Petrie, ed. by C. C. Stewart, *History of North Africa from the Arab conquest to 1830*. London, 1970.
- Kamal, Y. *Monumenta cartographica Africae et Aegypti*. Cairo and Leiden, 1926–51. 5 vols.
- La Roncière, C. de. *La Découverte de l'Afrique au moyen âge*. Cairo, 1924–7. 3 vols.
- Mauny, R. *Tableau géographique de l'ouest africain au moyen âge. Mémoires de l'IFAN* (Dakar), 1961, no. 61; reprinted Amsterdam, 1967.
- Mauny, R. *Les siècles obscurs de l'Afrique noire: histoire et archéologie*. Paris, 1970.
- Murdock, G. P. *Africa, its peoples and their culture history*. New York, 1959.
- Oliver, Roland and Mathew, Gervase, eds. *History of East Africa*, Vol. I. Oxford, 1963.
- Schacht, Joseph. *An introduction to Islamic Law*. Oxford, 1964.
- Seligman, C. G. *The races of Africa*. London, 1930.
- Thompson, L. A. ed. *African societies in southern Africa*. London, 1969.
- Thompson, L. A. and Ferguson, J. eds. *Africa in classical antiquity*. Ibadan, 1969.
- Vansina, Jan, Mauny, R. and Thomas, L. V. eds. *The historian in tropical Africa*. Oxford, 1964.
- Wilson, M. and Thompson, L. M. eds. *Oxford history of South Africa*, Vol. I. Oxford and London, 1969.

Chronology and radiocarbon dating

- Balout, L. *Préhistoire de l'Afrique du Nord: essai de chronologie*. Paris, 1955.
- Boardman, J. 'Evidence for the dating of Greek settlements in Cyrenaica', *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 1966, 61, 149–56.

- Butzer, K. W., Isaac, G. L., Richardson, J. L. and Washbourn-Kamau, C. K. 'Radiocarbon dating of East African lake levels', *Science*, 1972, 175, 1069-76.
- Campo, M. van. 'Pollen analyses in the Sahara', in Wendorf and Marks, eds., *Problems in prehistory* (see under 'General' section, Prehistory), 45-64.
- Carter, P. L. and Vogel, J. C. 'The dating of industrial assemblages from stratified sites in eastern Lesotho', *Man*, N.S., 1974, 9, 557-70.
- Dart, R. A. and Beaumont, P. 'Ratification and retrocession of earlier Swaziland iron ore mining radiocarbon datings', *South African Journal of Science*, 1968, 64, 6.
- Diop, C. A. *Le Laboratoire de Radiocarbène de l'IFAN*. Dakar, 1968.
- Fagan, B. M. 'Radiocarbon dates for sub-Saharan Africa', *Journal of African History*: 1961, 2, 137-9; 1963, 4, 127-8; 1965, 6, 107-16; 1966, 7, 495-506; 1967, 8, 513-27; 1969, 10, 149-69.
- Flight, Colin. 'A survey of recent results in the radiocarbon chronology of northern and western Africa', *Journal of African History*, 1973, 14, 4, 531-54.
- Phillipson, D. W. 'Notes on the later prehistoric radiocarbon chronology of eastern and southern Africa', *Journal of African History*, 1970, 11, 1, 1-16.
- Phillipson, D. W. 'The chronology of the Iron Age in Bantu Africa', *Journal of African History*, 1975, 16, 321-42.
- Shaw, Thurstan. 'On radiocarbon chronology of the Iron Age in sub-Saharan Africa', *Current Anthropology*, 1969, 10, 2-3, 226-31.
- Soper, R. C. 'New radiocarbon dates for eastern and southern Africa', *Journal of African History*, 1974, 15, 2, 175-92.
- Stuiver, M. and Van der Merwe, N. J. 'Radiocarbon chronology of the Iron Age in sub-Saharan Africa', *Current Anthropology*, 1968, 9, 54-8.
- Sutton, J. E. G. 'New radiocarbon dates for eastern and southern Africa', *Journal of African History*, 1972, 13, 1-24.
- Wendorf, F. and others. 'Dates for the Middle Stone Age of East Africa', *Science*, 1974, 187, 740-2.
- Wenig, S. 'Bemerkungen zur Chronologie des Reiches von Meroe', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung der deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1967, 13, 10-44.

Crops, agriculture and domestication

- Allen, W. *The African husbandman*. Edinburgh, 1965.
- Clark, J. D. 'The domestication process in sub-Saharan Africa with special reference to Ethiopia', *IXe Congrès de l'Union Internationale des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protéohistoriques* (Nice, Sept. 1976). Preprint volume, Colloque xx, *Origines de l'élevage et de la domestication*, 56-115 [forthcoming].
- Dalziel, J. M. *The useful plants of west tropical Africa*. London, 1937.
- Davies, Oliver, Hugot, H. J. and Seddon, D. 'The origins of African agriculture', *Current Anthropology*, 1968, 9, 5, 478-509.
- Harlan, J. R. *Crops and man*. Madison, 1975.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Harlan, J. R., de Wet, J. M. J. and Stemler, A. B. L. eds. *Origins of plant domestication in Africa*. The Hague and Paris, 1976.
- Hutchinson, Sir James, ed. *Essays in crop plant evolution*. London, 1965.
- Portères, R. 'Berceaux agricoles primaires sur le continent africain', *Journal of African History*, 1962, 3, 2, 195-210.
- Portères, R. 'Le Millet coracan, ou finger millet (*Eleusine coracana gaertner*)', in Harlan and others, eds., *Origins* . . . (see above).
- Shaw, Thurstan. 'Early agriculture in Africa', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 1972, 6, 143-91.
- Snowden, J. D. *The cultivated races of sorghum*. London, 1936.
- Ucko, P. J. and Dimbleby, G. W. eds. *The domestication and exploitation of plants and animals*. London, 1969.
- Zeuner, F. E. *A history of domesticated animals*. London, 1963.

Languages

- Abdelgadir Mahmoud Abdulla, ed. *Studies in ancient languages of the Sudan*. Khartoum, 1974.
- Dalby, D. ed. *Language and history in Africa*. London, 1970.
- Greenberg, Joseph H. *Studies in African linguistic classification*. New Haven, 1955.
- Greenberg, Joseph H. *The languages of Africa*. The Hague, 1963. Rev. edn Bloomington, 1966. Also printed in *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 1963, 29, 1, Pt 1.
- Greenberg, Joseph H. 'Linguistic evidence regarding Bantu origins', *Journal of African History*, 1972, 13, 2, 187-216.
- Guthrie, Malcolm. 'Languages and history', *Journal of African History*, 1964, 5, 1, 135-6.
- Guthrie, Malcolm. *Comparative Bantu: an introduction to the comparative linguistics and prehistory of the Bantu languages*. Farnborough, 1967-71. 4 vols.
- Heine, B. 'Zur genetische Gliederung der Bantu-Sprachen', *Afrika und Übersee*, 1972-3, 56, 164-85.
- Henrici, Alick. 'Numerical classification of Bantu languages', *African Language Studies*, 1973, 14.
- Shinnie, P. L. 'Multilingualism in medieval Nubia', in Abdelgadir Mahmoud Abdulla, ed., *Studies* . . . (see above), 41-7.
- Studies in ancient languages of the Sudan*. See above under Abdelgadir Mahmoud Abdulla.
- Westermann, D. 'Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu', *Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen*, 1927, 30.

Patrologia, inscriptions and papyri

- Cagnat, R. and Merlin, A. *Inscriptions latines d'Afrique*. Paris, 1923.
- Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* [CIG]. Berlin, 1825-77.
- Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* [CIL]. Berlin, 1881-1916. [Vol. VIII concerns Africa.]

GENERAL

- Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* [Corp. Script. Christ. Orient.]. Paris, Louvain, etc. *Scriptores Arabici*, *Scriptores Coptici*, *Scriptores Syri*.
Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum [CSEL]. Vienna.
 Cowley, A. E. ed. *Aramaic papyri of the fifth century BC*. Oxford, 1923.
 Gsell, S. and Pflaum, H. G. *Inscriptions latines d'Algérie*. Paris, 1923-57.
 Knopf, R. and Krueger, G. *Ausgewählte Märtyrakeren*. 1901- .
 Maspero, J. *Papyrus grecs de l'époque byzantine*. Paris, 1910-16. 3 vols.
Papyrus Bodmer [P. Bodmer], Vol. xx, ed. by V. Martin. Geneva, 1964.
Papyrus Oxyrhynchus [P. Oxy.]. Egypt Exploration Society (London), from 1898.
Patrologia cursus completus, series Graeca [PG], ed. by J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1857-66.
Patrologia cursus completus, series Latina [PL], ed. by J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1844-64.
Patrologia Orientalis [PO], ed. by B. T. A. Evetts. Paris, from 1901.

Prehistory and human evolution

- Alimen, H. *The prehistory of Africa*. London, 1957.
 Bishop, W. W. and Clark, J. D. eds. *Background to evolution in Africa*. Chicago, 1967.
 Bishop, W. W. and Miller, J. A. eds. *Calibration of hominoid evolution*. Edinburgh, 1972.
 Brooks, C. E. P. *Climate through the ages*. London, 1949.
 Butzer, K. W. and Isaac, G. L. eds. *After the Australopithecines: stratigraphy, ecology and culture change in the Middle Pleistocene*. The Hague, 1975.
 Campbell, B. G. *Human evolution*, 2nd edn. Chicago, 1972.
 Clark, J. D. *The prehistory of Africa*. London and New York, 1970.
 Clark, J. D. ed. *Atlas of African prehistory*. Chicago, 1967.
 Clark, W. E. Le Gros. *The fossil evidence for human evolution*. Chicago, 1955.
 Coppens, Y., Howell, F. C., Isaac, G. L. and Leakey, R. E. F. eds. *Earliest man and environments in the Lake Rudolf basin. Prehistoric archeology and ecology*, 2. Chicago, 1976.
 Davies, Oliver. *West Africa before the Europeans*. London, 1967.
 Fage, J. D. and Oliver, Roland eds. *Papers in African prehistory*. Cambridge, 1970.
 Hawkes, J. and Woolley, Sir Leonard. *Prehistory and the beginnings of civilization*, Vol. 1 of UNESCO *History of mankind*. UNESCO and London, 1963.
 Howell, F. C. and Bourlière, F. eds. *African ecology and human evolution*. Chicago, 1963.
 Hugot, H. J. ed. *Actes du V^e congrès panafricain de préhistoire et de l'étude du Quaternaire (Dakar, 1967)*. Chambéry, 1972.
 Isaac, G. L. and McCown, E. R. eds. *Human origins: Louis Leakey and the East African evidence*. Menlo Park, Calif., 1976.
 Kurth, G. ed. *Evolution and hominisation*, 2nd edn. Stuttgart, 1968.
 Mortelmans, G. and Nenquin, J. eds. *Actes du IV^e congrès panafricain de préhistoire*. Tervuren, 1962.
 Oakley, K. P. *Man the toolmaker*, 6th edn. Chicago, 1976.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Oliver, Roland and Fagan, B. M. *Africa in the Iron Age*. Cambridge, 1975.
 Phillipson, D. W., *The later prehistory of eastern and southern Africa*. London, 1977.
 Pilbeam, D. *The ascent of man: an introduction to human evolution*. New York, 1972.
 Shinnie, P. L. ed. *The African Iron Age*. Oxford, 1971.
 Tuttle, R. L. H. ed. *Palaeoanthropology: morphology and ecology*. The Hague, 1975.
 Washburn, S. L. and Moore, R. *Ape into man: a study of human evolution*. Boston, 1974.
 Wendorf, F. and Marks, A. E. eds. *Problems in prehistory: North Africa and the Levant*. Dallas, 1975.
 Van Zinderen Bakker, E. M. ed. *Palaeoecology of Africa*. Cape Town, from 1966.

Arabic texts: collections

- Cuoq, J. Med. *Recueil des sources arabes concernant l'Afrique occidentale du 8e au 16e siècle (Bilād al-Sūdān)*, trans. with notes by J. Cuoq. Paris, 1975.
 Hopkins, J. F. P. and Levtzion, N. eds. *Medieval Arabic sources on West Africa*, trans. and annotated by J. F. P. Hopkins and N. Levtzion. Cambridge [forthcoming].
 Kamal, Y. *Monumenta cartographica Africae et Aegypti*. 13 fascicules, Cairo/Leiden, 1926-51.
 Koubbel, L. E. and Mateev, V. V. eds. *Arabskie istochniki VII-XII vekov po etnografii i istorii Afriki yuzhnee Sakhary*. Moscow-Leningrad, 1965. 2 vols.
 Lévi-Provençal, E. ed. *Textes Arabes Marocains*. Rabat, 1934.
 Lewicki, T. *Arabic external sources for the history of Africa south of the Sahara*. London, 1969.

Arabic writers

- Akhhār al-Zamān*, ed. by 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Aḥmad Ḥanafī. Cairo, 1938.
 al-Bakrī. *Kitāb al-masālik wa'l mamālik*, ed. by M. G. de Slane. Algiers, 1911. French trans. by M. G. de Slane, *Description de l'Afrique septentrionale*. Algiers, 1911-13; reprinted Paris, 1965. See also V. Monteil, 'Routier de l'Afrique blanche et noir de nord-ouest: al-Bakrī (Cordova, 1068)', *Bulletin de l'IFAN*, 1968, 30 (sér. B), 39-116.
 al-Balādhurī. *Kitāb futūḥ al-Bulḏān*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje. Leiden, 1863-6.
 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam. *Kitāb futūḥ Miṣr wa'l-Maghrib wa-akhhārihā*, ed. by C. C. Torrey. English trans., *The history of the conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain*. New Haven, 1922. Revised edn. and French trans. of the part dealing with the Maghrib by A. Gateau, *Conquête de l'Afrique du Nord et de l'Espagne*. Algiers, 1942; 2nd edn, 1948.
 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm, in E. Lévi-Provençal, 'Un Nouveau Récit de la conquête de l'Afrique du Nord par les Arabes', *Arabica Occidentalia*, 1954, 1, 17-43.
 Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī. *al-Risāla*, ed. by L. Brecher. Algiers, 1952.
 Ibn Abī Zar'. *al-Anīs al-mu'rib bi-rawḍ al-qirṣās fī akhhār mulāk al-Maghrib wa-ta'rikh madīnat Fās*, ed. by C. J. Tornberg. Uppsala, 1843-66.
 Ibn al-Athīr. *Kitāb al-Kāmil fī 'l-ta'rikh*, ed. by C. J. Tornberg. Leiden, 1851-76 and Cairo, 1884-5. French trans. by E. Fagnan, 'Débuts de la

- dynastie almoravide', *Revue Africaine*, 1900, 44, 175-9. Also in *Annales du Maghreb et de l'Espagne*. Algiers, 1898.
- Ibn Baṭṭūṭa. *Tuḥfat al-nuẓẓār fī gharā'ib al-amṣār wa-'ajā'ib al-asfār* [*Voyages*], ed. and trans. by C. Defrémery and R. B. Sanguinetti. Paris, 1922.
- Ibn al-Faqīh. *Mukhtaṣar kitāb al-buldān*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje. Leiden, 1885.
- Ibn Ḥammād. *Akbbār mulūk Banī 'Ubayd wa-sīratuhum*, ed. by M. Vanderheyden. Algiers and Paris, 1927.
- Ibn Ḥawqal. *Kitāb ṣūrat al-arḍ*, ed. by J. H. Kramers. Leiden 1938-9. French trans. by J. H. Kramers and Gaston Wiet, *Configuration de la terre*. Beirut and Paris, 1964.
- Ibn 'Idhārī al-Marrākushī. *Kitāb al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akbbār al-Andalus wa'l-Maghrib*, ed. by G. S. Colin and E. Lévi-Provençal. Leiden, 1948-51. French trans. by E. Fagnan, *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord et de l'Espagne intitulée Al-Bayano 'l-Maghrib*. Algiers, 1901.
- Ibn 'Idhārī al-Marrākushī. 'Un fragmento inedito de Ibn Idhari sobre los Almorāvides', *Hespéris-Tamuda*, 1961, 2, 43-111.
- Ibn Khaldūn. *Kitāb ta'rikh al-duwal al-Islāmiya bi'l-Maghrib min Kitāb al-'Ibar*, ed. and French trans. by M. G. de Slane [*Histoire des Berbères et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique septentrionale*]. Paris, 1847. 2nd edn, ed. by H. Casanova and H. Pérès, Paris, 1925-56.
- Ibn Khurdādhbih. *Kitāb al-masālik wa'l-mamālik*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje. Leiden, 1889.
- Ibn Nājl. *Ma'ālim al-imān*. Tunis, AH 1320.
- Ibn Qutayba. *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*, ed. by F. Wüstenfeld. Göttingen, 1850.
- Ibn Ṣaghīr. *Akbbār al-a'imma al-rustumiyyīn* ['Chronique d'Ibn Ṣaghīr sur les imāms rostémides de Tahert'], ed. by A. de C. Motylinski. *Actes du 14e Congrès international des Orientalistes, Algiers, 1905*. Paris, 1908, 3-132.
- Ibn Sa'id. *Kitāb al-mughrib fī ḥulā' l-Maghrib*, Book IV, ed. and trans. into German by K. L. Tallqvist, *Geschichte der Ikfiden und Fustāfensische Biographien*. Leiden, 1899.
- Ibn Sa'id. *Kitāb baṣṭ al-arḍ fī'l ṭūl wa'l-'arḍ*, ed. by J. V. Gines. Tetuan, 1958.
- al-Idrisī. *Kitāb nuẓhat al-mushtāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq*, ed. and trans. by R. Dozy and M. J. de Goeje [*Description de l'Afrique du Nord et de l'Espagne*]. Leiden, 1866.
- al-Iṣṭakhri. *Kitāb al-masālik wa'l-mamālik*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje. Leiden, 1870.
- al-Khwārizmī. *Ṣūrat al-arḍ*, ed. by H. von Mžik. Vienna, 1926.
- Mafākhīr al-Barbar*, in Lévi-Provençal, ed., *Textes Arabes . . .* (see under Arabic texts).
- al-Maliki. *Riyād al-nufūs fī ṭabaqāt 'ulamā' al-Qayrawān wa Ifrīqiya*, ed. by H. Monès. Cairo, 1951.
- al-Maqrīzī. *Kitāb al-Mawā'iz wa'l-I'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa'l-āthār* [*Khiṭaṭ*], ed. by Gaston Wiet. Cairo, 1911-27. 4 vols.
- al-Mas'ūdī. *Kitāb murūj al-dhahab wa-ma'ādin al-jawhar*, ed. and trans. by C. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille [*Les Prairies d'or*]. Paris 1864-77. Revised edn trans. by C. Pellat. Paris, 1965.
- al-Nuwayrī. *Nihāyat al-'Arab*. Granada, 1919.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- al-Qāḍī 'Iyād. *Tartīb al-madārik wa-taqrīb al-masālik li-ma'rifat a'lām madhhab Mālik*, ed. by Aḥmad Bakir Maḥmūd. Beirut, 1967.
- al-Qāḍī 'l-Nu'mān [Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān]. *Iftitāḥ al-Da'wa wa ibtidā' al-Dawla*, ed. by W. al-Qāḍī. Beirut, 1970.
- al-Sa'dī. *Ta'riḫ al-Sūdān*, ed. and trans. by O. Houdas. Paris, 1900.
- Sa'id b. Baṭriq [Eutychius]. *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales*, ed. by L. Cheikho (*Corp. Script. Christ. Orient., Scriptores Arabici*, 3rd series, Vols. vi, vii). Beirut, Paris and Leipzig, 1906, 1909.
- al-Shammākhī. *Kitāb al-siyar* [lithograph edn]. Cairo, 1883-4.
- al-Tādill. *Kitāb al-tashawwuf ilā rijāl al-taṣawwuf*, ed. by A. Faure. Rabat, 1958.
- Ta'riḫ al-Fatāsh*, ed. and trans. by O. Houdas and M. Delafosse. Paris, 1913.
- al-Ya'qūbī. *Kitāb al-Buldān*, *Bibliotheca geographorum arabicorum*, vii, ed. by M. J. de Goeje. Leiden, 1892. French trans. by Gaston Wiet, *Le Livre des pays*. Cairo, 1937; Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale.
- al-Ya'qūbī. *Kitāb al-Ta'riḫ*, ed. by H. T. Houtsma. Leiden, 1863-6.
- Yāqūt. *Kitāb mu'jam al-buldān*, ed. by F. Wüstenfeld. Leipzig, 1866.
- al-Zuhri. *Kitāb al-Ja'rāfiyya*, ed. by M. Hadj Sadok, *Bulletin d'Études Orientales*, 1968, 21, 1-312. Also (as al-Zouhri) in Y. Kamal, *Monumenta cartographica* . . . (see under General works), Vol. III.

I. THE LEGACY OF PREHISTORY

- Alimen, H. *The prehistory of Africa*. London, 1957.
- Alimen, M. H. 'Les "Isthmes" Hispano-Marocain et Siculo-Tunisien aux temps acheuléens', *L'Anthropologie*, 1975, 79, 399-436.
- Andrews, P. and Walker, A. 'The primate and other fauna from Fort Ternan, Kenya', in Isaac and McCown, eds., *Human origins* . . . (see under 'General' section, Prehistory), 279-303.
- Anthony, B. 'The Stillbay question', in Hugot, ed., *Vle congrès panafricain* . . . (see under 'General' section, Prehistory), 80-2.
- Arkell, A. J. *Early Khartoum*. Oxford, 1949.
- Arkell, A. J. *Shabeinab*. Oxford, 1953.
- Arkell, A. J. *The prehistory of the Nile Valley*. Leiden-Cologne, 1975; *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, 1 (2,A).
- Armstrong, A. L. 'Rhodesian archaeological expedition, 1929: excavation in Bambata Cave and researches on prehistoric sites in Southern Rhodesia', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society of London*, 1931, 120, 715-21.
- Balout, L. *Préhistoire de l'Afrique du Nord: essai de chronologie*. Paris, 1955.
- Balout, L. *Algérie préhistorique*. Paris, 1958.
- Bishop, W. W. 'Pliocene problems relating to human evolution', in Isaac and McCown, eds., *Human origins* . . . (see under 'General' section, Prehistory), 139-53.
- Bishop, W. W. and Clark, J. D. eds. *Background to evolution* . . . See under 'General' section, Prehistory.
- Bishop, W. W. and Miller, J. A. eds. *Calibration of hominoid evolution*. See under 'General' section, Prehistory.
- Bond, G. 'Pleistocene environments in southern Africa', in Howell and

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Summers, R. 'Iron Age industries of southern Africa', in Bishop and Clark, eds., *Background to evolution . . .* (see under 'General' section, Prehistory), 687-700.
- Summers, R., Robinson, K. R. and Whitty, A. 'Zimbabwe excavations, 1958', *Occasional Papers of the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia*, 1961, 23A.
- Sutton, J. E. G. 'The interior of East Africa', in Shinnie, ed., *African Iron Age* (see under 'General' section, Prehistory), 142-82.
- Sutton, J. E. G. 'Radiocarbon dates . . .' See under 'General' section, Chronology.
- Sutton, J. E. G. *The archaeology of the western highlands of Kenya*. Nairobi, 1973.
- Sutton, J. E. G. and Roberts, A. D. 'Uvinza and its salt industry', *Azania*, 1968, 3, 45-86.
- Thompson, L. A. ed. *African societies . . .* See under General works.
- Tobias, P. V. 'Skeletal remains from Inyanga', in Summers, *Inyanga* (see above).
- Turnbull, C. *Wayward servants*. London, 1965.
- Tweedie, A. 'Towards a history of the Bemba from oral tradition', in E. Stokes and R. Brown, eds., *The Zambesian past*. Manchester, 1966, 197-225.
- Van der Kerken, G. *L'Ethnie Mongo*. Brussels, 1944. 3 vols.
- Van Noten, F. L. *Les Tombes du roi Cyirima Rujugiza et de la reine-mère Nyirayulu Kanjogera: description archéologique*. Tervuren, Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1972.
- Vansina, Jan. *Kingdoms of the savanna*. Madison, 1966.
- Vogel, J. O. 'Iron Age research project of the Livingstone Museum', *Archaeology*, June 1968, 216-18.
- Vogel, J. O. 'The Kalamo culture of southern Zambia', *Zambia Museums Journal*, 1971, 77-8.
- Vogel, J. O. *Kamangoza*. Zambia, 1971.
- Vogel, J. O. *Kumadzulo*. Nairobi, 1972.
- Vogel, J. O. 'Some Early Iron Age sites in Southern and Western Zambia', *Azania*, 1973, 8, 25-54.
- Westermann, D. 'Die westlichen Sudansprachen . . .' See under 'General' section, Languages.
- Wilson, M. 'The Nguni people' and 'The Sotho, Venda and Tongo', in Wilson and Thompson, eds., *Oxford history of South Africa*, 1 (see under General works), 75-130, 131-86.
- Wilson, M. and Thompson, Leonard, eds., *Oxford history of South Africa*, 1. See under General works.
- Wrigley, C. 'Speculations on the economic prehistory of Africa', *Journal of African History*, 1960, 1, 189-204. Also in Fage and Oliver, eds., *Papers in African prehistory* (see under 'General' section, Prehistory), 59-74.

7. THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

The following abbreviations have been used in this section (for details, see under 'General' section, Patrologia, inscriptions and papyri).

CIG *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*

CIL *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*

7. THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

Corp. Script. Christ. Orient. *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*

CSEL *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*

PG *Patrologia cursus completus, series Graeca*

PL *Patrologia cursus completus, series Latina*

PO *Patrologia Orientalis*

P. Oxy. *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus*

Texts, inscriptions etc. not otherwise listed will be found in one of these collections.

Acta Proconsularia, ed. by W. Hartel.

Acta Saturnini, in PL, 8.

Albertini, E., in *Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques*, 1922, 26-32.

Albertini, E., in *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 1939, 100.

Allais, Y. *Djemila*. Paris, 1938.

Altaner, B. and Stuiber, A. *Patrologie (Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter)*, 7th edn. Freiburg, 1966.

Barnes, T. D. *Tertullian, a historical and literary study*. Oxford, 1971.

Bell, H. I. *Jews and Greeks in Egypt*. Oxford, 1924.

Bell, H. I. *Egypt from Alexander . . . See under ch. 3.*

Bell, H. I. and Skeat, T. C. eds. *Fragments of an unknown gospel*. London, 1935.

Berthier, A. *Tiddis*. Algiers. 1954.

Berthier, A., Logeart, F. and Martin, M. *Les Vestiges du Christianisme antique dans la Numidie centrale*. Algiers, 1942.

Besa. *Life of Shenute*, ed. by H. Wiesman. *Corp. Script. Christ. Orient., Scriptores Coptici*, II. Paris, 1931.

Beschouach, A. 'Une stèle consacrée à Saturne le 8 Novembre 323', *Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques*, N.S., 1968, 4 (Paris 1969), 253-68.

Breviarum causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum, xx; in PL, 68.

Brisson, J. P. *Autonomisme et Christianisme dans l'Afrique romaine de Septime Sévère à l'invasion vandale*. Paris, 1958.

Brooks, E. W. ed. and trans. *Vitae virorum apud Monophysitarum celeberrimorum*. *Corp. Script. Christ. Orient., Scriptores Syri*, III, 25. Paris, 1907.

Brown, P. R. L. *Augustine of Hippo, a biography*. London, 1967.

Brown, P. R. L. *Religion and society in the age of St Augustine*. London, 1972.

Brunschvig, Robert, 'Un texte arabe du IXe siècle intéressant le Fezzan', *Revue Africaine*, 1945, 89, 21-5.

Buonaiuti, E. *Il Cristianesimo nell'Africa romana*. Bari, 1928.

Burkitt, F. C. 'The Christian Church in the East', in *Cambridge ancient history*, Vol. XII. Cambridge, 1939, 476ff.

Bury, J. B. *History of the later Roman Empire*, Vol. II. London, 1923.

Butler, A. J. *The Arab conquest of Egypt and the last thirty years of the Roman dominion*. Oxford, 1902.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cagnat, R. and Merlin, A. *Inscriptions* . . . See under 'General' section, *Patrologia*.
- Calderone, S., in *La Parola del Passato*, 1967, 113, 94-109.
- Carcopino, J. 'Les Castella de la plaine de Setif', *Revue Africaine*, 1918, 62, 1ff.
- Christophe, Marcel. *Le Tombeau de la Chrétienne*. Paris, 1951.
- Cintas, J. and Fenille, G. L. 'Église et Baptistère de Thibiua', *Karthago*, 1953, 2.
- Courtois, C. *Victor de Vita et son oeuvre*. Algiers, 1954.
- Courtois, C. *Les Vandales* . . . See under ch. 5.
- Courtois, C., Leschi, L., Perrat, C. and Saumagne, C. *Tablettes Albertini, actes privés de l'époque vandale*. Algiers and Paris, 1952.
- Cross, F. L. ed. *The Jung codex*. Oxford, 1955.
- Cyprian. *Ad Demetrianum, Letters, Works*, ed. by W. Hartel. CSEL, III, 1. Vienna, 1868.
- Danielou, J. *Origène*. Paris, 1955.
- Delehaye, H. 'Contributions récentes à l'hagiographie de Rome et de l'Afrique', *Analecta Bollandinae*, 1936, 54, 313-16.
- Diehl, E. *L'Afrique byzantine*. Paris, 1896.
- Diesner, H. J. *Kirche und Staat im spätrömischen Reich*. Berlin, 1963.
- Diesner, H. J. *Der Untergang der römischen Herrschaft in Nordafrika*. Weimar, 1964.
- Diesner, H. J. *Fulgentius von Ruspe als Theolog und Kirchenpolitiker*. Berlin, 1966.
- Ebeid, R. Y. and Wickham, L. R. 'A collection of unpublished Syriac letters of Timothy Achirus', *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 1970, 21, 321-69.
- Ebeid, R. Y. and Wickham, L. R. 'An unknown letter of Cyril of Alexandria in Syriac', *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 1971, 22, 420-34.
- Ebeid, R. Y. and Wickham, L. R. 'A note on the Syriac version of Athanasius' *Ad Epictetum* in Ms BM Add. 14557', *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 1972, 23, 144-54.
- Eusebius. *Historia Ecclesiastica*, trans. by J. E. L. Oulton. See also below under Stevenson, ed., *A new Eusebius*.
- Février, P. A. *Le développement urbain en Afrique du Nord*. Cahiers archaéologiques, 14, Paris, 1964.
- Février, P. A. and Duval, Y. 'Inscription martyrologique sur plomb de la région de Telerghma (AD 637)', *Mélanges de l'école française à Rome*, 1961, 81, 257-320.
- Foerster, W. *A selection of Gnostic texts*, Vol. II. Oxford, 1974.
- Frend, W. H. C. 'North Africa and Europe in the early Middle Ages', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1955, 5, 5, 61-81.
- Frend, W. H. C., 'Circumcellions and Monks', *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 1969, 20, 2, 542-49.
- Frend, W. H. C. *The Donatist Church*, 2nd edn. Oxford, 1971.
- Frend, W. H. C. *The rise of the Monophysite movement*. Cambridge, 1972.
- Frend, W. H. C. 'Open questions concerning the Christians and the Roman Empire in the age of the Severi', *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 1974, 25, 2, 333-52.

7. THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

- Freund, W. H. C. *Religion popular and unpopular in the early Christian centuries*. London, 1976.
- Gautier, E.-F. *Le Passé . . .* See under General works.
- Gesta apud Zenophilum*, ed. by C. Ziwsa. CSEL, xxvi. English trans. in Stevenson, ed., *A new Eusebius* (see below).
- Grenfell, B. P. and Hunt, A. S. eds. *Oxyrhynchus papyri, ΛΟΓΙΑ ΙΗΣΟΥ* ['Logia Jesu']. London, 1897. 'New sayings of Jesus' and 'Fragment of a lost gospel'. London, 1904.
- Grillmeier, A. and Bacht, H. *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*. Würzburg, 1951-3. 2 vols.
- Gsell, S., in *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome*, 1894, 14, 290ff.
- Gsell, S. *Atlas archéologique de l'Algérie*. Algiers, 1911.
- Gsell, S. and Pflaum, H. G. *Inscriptions latines de l'Algérie*. Paris, 1923-57.
- Hardy, E. R. *The large estates of Byzantine Egypt*. New York, 1931.
- Hardy, E. R. *Christian Egypt, church and people*. New York and Oxford, 1952.
- Harris, J. R. ed. *The Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs*, Vol. 1, no. 2 of *Cambridge texts and studies*. Cambridge, 1891.
- Heussi, K. *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums*. Tübingen, 1936.
- Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam. See under 'General' section, Arabic writers.
- John of Ephesus. *Historia ecclesiastica*, ed. by E. W. Brooks. *Corp. Script. Christ. Orient. Scriptores Syri*. Louvain, 1935-6.
- John of Ephesus. *Lives of the eastern saints*, ed. by E. W. Brooks. PO, 18.
- John of Nikiou. *Chronique de Jean, Evêque de Nikiou*, ed. and trans. by A. Zotenberg. Paris, 1883.
- Jones, A. H. M. 'Census records of the later Roman Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1963, 53, 49-64.
- Jones, A. H. M. *The later Roman Empire*. Oxford and Norman, Okla., 1964.
- Knipfing, J. P. 'The Libelli of the Decian persecution', *Harvard Theological Review*, 1923, 16, 345-90.
- Knopf, R. and Krueger, G. *Ausgewählte . . .* See under 'General' section. Patrologia.
- Labriolle, P. de. 'Les débuts du monachisme', in J. R. Palanque, G. Bardy et P. de Labriolle, *De la paix Constantinienne à la mort de Théodose*, Vol. III of A. Fliche and V. Martin, *Histoire de l'église*. Paris, 1947.
- Lancel, Serge, ed. 'Actes de la conférence de Carthage', *Sources chrétiennes* (Paris), 1972, 195.
- Leglay, M. 'La vie intellectuelle d'une cité africaine aux confins de l'Aurès', *Collection Latomus*, 1960, 45.
- Leglay, M. *Saturne africaine: histoire*. Paris, 1966.
- Leipoldt, J. 'Schenute von Atriye und die Entstehung des national-ägyptischen Christentums', in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, Vol. xxv. Leipzig. 1904.
- Leschi, L. 'Le Centenarium d'Aqua Viva', *Revue Africaine*, 1943, 87, 5-22.
- Leschi, L. *Tipasa*. Algiers, 1950.
- Lietzmann, H. *Geschichte der alten Kirche*. Berlin, 4 vols., 1937-44.
- Marcillet-Jaubert, J. *Les Inscriptions d'Altava*. Paris, 1968.
- Marec, E. *Hippone*. Algiers, 1950.
- Markus, R. A. 'Donatism, the last phase', in C. J. Cuming, ed., *Studies in church history*, Vol. 1. Leiden, 1964, 118-26.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Markus, R. A. 'Religious dissent in North Africa in the Byzantine period', in C. J. Cuming, ed., *Studies in church history*, Vol. III. Leiden, 1966, 140-9.
- Maspero, J. *Papyrus grecs de l'époque byzantine*. Paris, 1910-16. 3 vols.
- Michalowski, K. *Faras: die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand*. Zurich, 1967.
- Migne, J.-P. ed. PG, PL.
- Millar, F. 'The date of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 1962, 48, 124-31.
- Monceaux, P. *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*. Paris, 1901-23. 7 vols.
- Monceaux, P. *Timgad chrétien*. Paris, 1911.
- Montefiore, H. W., in *New Testament Studies*, 1961, 5, 220-48.
- Musurillo, H. *The acts of the Christian martyrs*. Oxford, 1972.
- Opitz, H. G. *Athanasius' Werke*. Berlin, from 1934.
- Opitz, H. G. *Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des Schriften der Athanasius*. Berlin, 1935.
- Optatus of Milevis. *De Schismate Donatistarum*, ed. by C. Ziwsa. CSEL, xxvi.
- Origen. *Dialogue with Heracleides*, ed. by J. Scherer as *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide et les évêques, ses collègues, sur le Père, le Fils et l'Âme*. Cairo, 1949.
- Palladius. *Historia Lausiaca*, ed. by C. Butler. Cambridge, 1898.
- Papyrus Bodmer*. See under 'General' section, Patrologia.
- Papyrus Oxyrhynchus*. See under 'General' section, Patrologia.
- Passio Maximiliani*, ed. by R. Knopf and G. Krueger, in *Ausgewählte ...* (see under 'General' section, Patrologia).
- Plumley, J. M. *The scrolls of Bishop Timotheos found at Q'asr Ibrim*. London, Egypt Exploration Society Monograph, 1975.
- Rea, J. R. ed. *P. Oxy.*, Vol. XL. London, 1972.
- Rostovtzeff, M. I. *Social and economic history ...* See under ch. 3.
- Severus. *Select letters*, ed. by E. W. Brooks. London 1902-4.
- Ste Croix, G. E. M. de. 'Aspects of the Great Persecution', *Harvard Theological Review*, 1954, 47, 84ff.
- Salama, P. 'La voie romaine de la vallée de la Tafna', *Bulletin d'Archéologie Algérienne*, 1966-7, 2, 183-217.
- Saumagne, C. *Cyprien, Evêque de Carthage, 'Pape' d'Afrique*. Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1975.
- Simon, M. 'Le Judaïsme berbère dans l'Afrique ancienne', *Revue de l'histoire et philosophie religieuse*, 1946, 26, 1ff and 105ff; reprinted in *Recherches d'histoire judéo-chrétienne, Études juives*, 1962, 8.
- Skeat, T. C. and Wegener, E. P. 'Trial before the Prefect of Egypt, Appius Sabinus, AD 250', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 1935, 21, 229-47.
- Stevenson, J. ed. *A new Eusebius*. London, 1957.
- Tengström, E. *Donatisten und Katholiken; soziale wirtschaftliche und politische Aspekte einer nordafrikanischen Kirchenspaltung*. Göteborg, 1964.
- Tertullian, in PL, Paris, 1845 and 1879, and CSEL, Vienna, 1868-
- Theophanes. *Chronicon*, ed. by J. Claassen. Bonn, 1839-41.
- Thouvenot, R. 'Les origines chrétiennes en Mauretanie Tingitane', *Revue des études anciennes*, 1969, 71, 354-78.
- Victor Vitensis. *Historia persecutionis africanae ecclesiae*, ed. by M. Petschenig. CSEL, VII. Vienna, 1881.

8. THE ARAB CONQUEST IN NORTH AFRICA

Vita Pachomii, in *PL*, 73.

Warmington, B. H. *The North African provinces from Diocletian to the Vandal conquest*. Cambridge, 1954.

Woodward, E. L. *Christianity and nationalism in the later Roman Empire*. London, 1916.

Zulueta, F. de. *De Patrociniis Vicorum*, Vol. 1 of *Oxford Studies in social and legal history*, ed. by P. Vinogradoff. Oxford, 1909.

8. THE ARAB CONQUEST AND THE RISE OF ISLAM IN NORTH AFRICA

Note: Items marked * are relevant to ch. 10 also.

*Amari, M. *Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia*, 2nd edn. Catania, 1933-5.

Andrae, T. *Die Person Muhammads in Lehre und Glaube seine Gemeinde*. Stockholm, 1918.

Aphrodito Papyri. See below under H. I. Bell, ed.

*al-Bakri. See under 'General' section, Arabic writers.

al-Balādhuri. See under 'General' section, Arabic writers.

Becker, C. H. *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens*. Strasburg, 1902-3. 2 vols.

Becker, C. H. 'The expansion of the Saracens', in *Cambridge medieval history*, Vol. II (see under General works), 329-90.

Becker, C. H. *Islamstudien*. Leipzig, 1924. 2 vols. [Vol. I is relevant.]

Becker, C. H. 'Papyrusstudien', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, 1909, 22, 137-54.

Bell, H. I. 'The Aphrodito Papyri', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1908, 28, 97-120.

Bell, H. I. 'The administration of Egypt under the Umayyad Khalifs', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 1928, 28.

Bell, H. I. 'Egypt and the Byzantine empire', in S. R. K. Glanville, ed., *The legacy of Egypt*, 1st edn. Oxford, 1942, 332-47.

Bell, H. I. ed. *Aphrodito Papyri*, (Vol. IV of *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*), London, 1917.

*Brett, Michael. 'Ifriqiya as a market for Saharan trade, from the tenth to the twelfth century AD', *Journal of African History*, 1969, 10, 3, 347-64.

*Brett, Michael. 'Fitnat al-Qayrawān'. Doctoral thesis, University of London, 1970.

*Brignon, J., Amin, A. and others. *Histoire du Maroc*. Casablanca, 1967.

Brunschvig, Robert. 'Ibn Abdal' hakam et la conquête de l'Afrique du Nord par les Arabes: étude critique', *Annales de l'Institut des Études Orientales* (Algiers), 1942-7, 6, 108-55.

Burton, J. '“Those are the high-flying cranes”', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 1970, 15, 246-65.

Butler, A. J. *Arab conquest of Egypt . . .* See under ch. 7.

Caetani, L. *Annali dell' Islam*. Milan, from 1905. 10 vols.

Cambridge medieval history. See under General works.

Coulson, N. J. *A history of Islamic Law*. Edinburgh, 1964.

Cresswell, K. A. C. *A short account of early Muslim architecture*. London, 1958.

Cresswell, K. A. C. *Early Muslim architecture*, 2nd edn. Oxford, 1970.

Crone, P. 'The Mawālī in the Umayyad period'. Doctoral thesis, University of London, 1973.



Plate 22 Djemila: general view and the Antonine baths. [ch. 7]
(Photo: W. H. C. Frend.)



Plate 23 Djemila: Temple to the Augustii, AD 229. [ch. 7]
(Photo: W. H. C. Frend.)

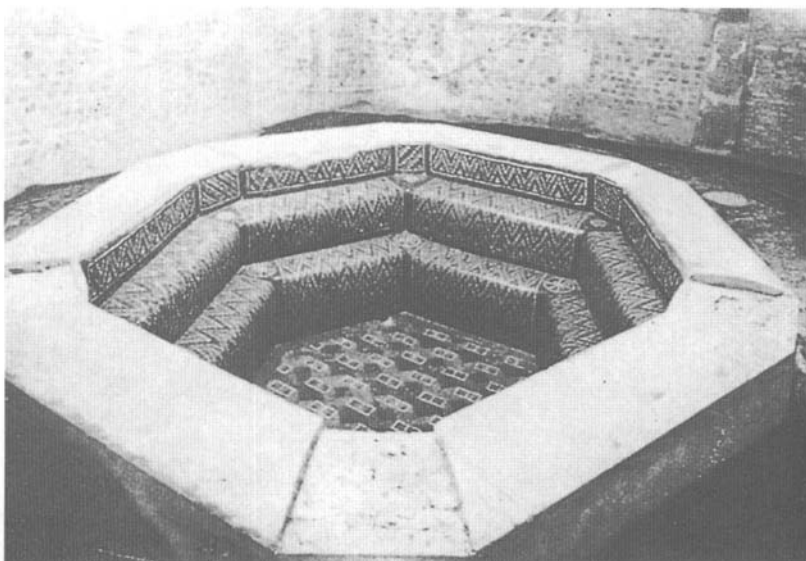


Plate 24 Baptismal font from Optatus Church (Donatist) at Timgad,
c. AD 385. [ch. 7]
(Photo courtesy Office Algérien d'Action Economique et Touristique
[OFALAC].)



Plate 25 Timgad: Christian cemetery from the church, looking
north. [ch. 7]
(Photo: W. H. C. Frend.)



Plate 26 Rural church, Henchir Guesses (central Algeria), showing
relics in place below the altar enclosure. [ch. 7]
(Photo: W. H. C. Frend.)

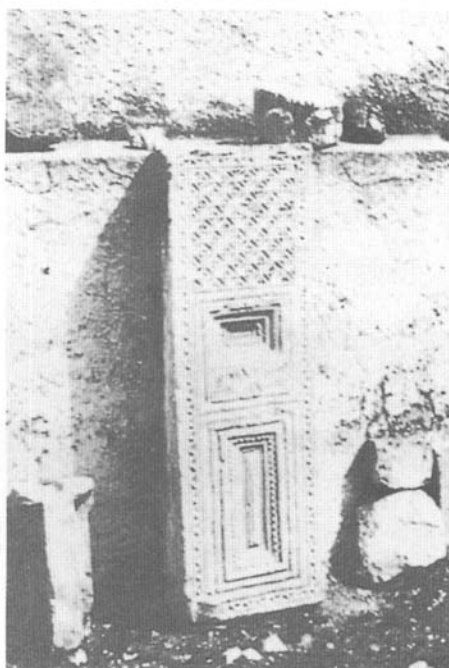


Plate 27 Fourth-century Christian stone carving at
Ain Zirara. [ch. 7]
(Photo: W. H. C. Frend.)



Plate 28 Djemila: baptismal font, with baptistery behind, probably early fifth century AD. [ch. 7]
(Photo courtesy OFALAC.)



Plate 29 Bir Djedd: rustic church in central Numidia, fourth–fifth century AD. [ch. 7]
(Photo: W. H. C. Frend.)



Plate 30 Mechta Azrou: rustic church in central Numidia, fourth–fifth century AD. Martyrs' relics are beneath the slab in altar enclosure. [ch. 7]
(Photo: M. Martin.)

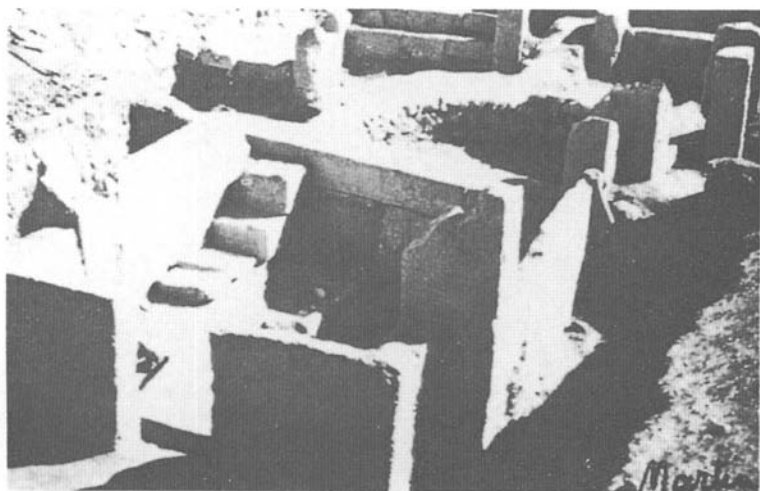


Plate 31 Mechta Azrou: choir and apse. [ch. 7]
(Photo: M. Martin.)